

*Bible. - Daniel. - appendix*  
16 THE

PROFETIC HISTORY

OF

DANIEL

ELUCIDATED AND EXPLAINED;

ALSO

IMPROVED IN

PRACTICAL REMARKS AND INFERENCES:

TO WHICH

MEDITATIONS

ON A FEW

SELECT VERSES

ARE SUBJOINED.

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## C H A P. I.

*The advancement of four Captive Hebrew Youths in  
the Court of Babylon.*

**I**N the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim King Ver. 1.  
of Judea, came Nebuchadnezzar King of Ba-  
bylon, unto Jerusalem and besieged and took it, 2

When the holy city Jerusalem was taken and ransacked, by the Chaldean army, three very eminent first-rate Prophets were found in it; namely, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Jeremiah, with a large number of captive Jews was left behind in Judea; where he delivered to his countrymen all the prophecies recorded in his book. But Ezekiel and Daniel, with many others, were carried captives into Chaldea. There Ezekiel contracted an intimate acquaintance with Daniel, and found him to be endued with extraordinary qualities. Hence in his prophetic book he represents him as being wise even to a proverb; Ezek. xxviii. 3. But this great man possessed higher and better qualities than a large fund of knowledge and good sense; even a rich stock of grace and holiness; therefore the same cotemporary prophet equals him to Noah and Job, in being transcendently good, also very powerful in prayer, and a peculiar favorite of heaven. See Ezek. xiv. 14. And indeed the sequel of this remarkable history will, I apprehend, clearly shew that in piety and zeal, in religious fortitude and patriotic love, also in an unblemish'd life Daniel had no equal among all the old Testament Patriarchs and Prophets; considering those three-fold temptations with which he was above 70 years dangerously surrounded in an idolatrous land, and a voluptuous, luxurious, intriguing, and persecuting court. These forefaid mental excellencies were adorned and beautified with nobility, of birth, and such pregnant parts improved by a princely education, as render'd his stile and diction peculiarly elegant and expressive;

Ver. pressive : And having spent the former part of his life in Judea, and the latter part in Chaldea, he learned the languages of both countries ; accordingly we find some chapters in this extraordinary prophetic history originally written by him in Hebrew, and the rest in Chaldee. This first chap. after a brief introduction, begins with a narrative of Daniel himself, and of three other young Jewish Noblemen, viz. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ; whom the Babylonish Monarch carried into captivity, as trophies to adorn his triumph, and as hostages to secure the fidelity of their kindred countrymen left behind in Judea. Soon after the arrival of these four noble youths at Babylon, their amiable forms and features, and their bright mental endowments attracted the attention and admiration of the Babylonish court, who presented them among others, as fit candidates for courtly preferment. The King took such a liking to them as to rank them with certain hopeful youths of his own Kingdom, with whom they were to be dieted and disciplin'd for some high office at court. Accordingly meat was duly sent them from the  
 5 King's table : on it they were to subsist for the space of three years ; during which time they were to be instructed in the literature of Chaldea. As they were also to become naturalized subjects, they  
 7 must change their Jewish into Chaldean names. To this latter they readily submitted : But with the King's meat they scrupled to de-  
 8 file themselves ; because part of it probably consisted of those eatables which the levitical law pronounced unclean. Now God in-  
 9 clined the Governor to indulge their scruples : nor had he any objection against it except this. " I fear my Lord the King, said he, who hath appointed your meat and your drink : for if he sees your  
 10 faces in worse liking than the other are in, he will suspect that I withhold your due allowances : and this may endanger my life."  
 11 To this Daniel replies ; let facts decide the point between us : for instance ; let our Governor, the Prince of the Eunuchs, take the  
 12 King's delicious morsels to his own table, and feed us ten days with such common and course fare as pulse and water ; and if this food do not answer the end as well as better, we are willing to change  
 13 it for royal dainties. To this the Governor consented ; and trial  
 14 being made, the event far exceeded his expectations ; for he found those who had all the while subsisted on coarse fare, to be in a better  
 15 plight than others who had been pamper'd with princely delicacies.

To proceed : Having been inform'd how abstemious and temperate, Ver 16  
 these Hebrew youths were in their diet ; we are, in consequence  
 thereof, told what a mighty progress they made in the endowments  
 and improvements of the mind. " God gave them skill and know- 17  
 ledge in all learning and wisdom ; and Daniel had understanding in 18  
 all visions and dreams." Of this he gave repeated proofs in the  
 subsequent parts of this Book. Yea, the King himself, who after-  
 wards inspected and examined these Hebrew youths, found them 20  
 ten times wiser than all his Chaldean Astrologers ; therefore he  
 gave them places and preferments in his royal palace. As to Daniel, 19  
 we are told that he continued (in high offices) to the reign of King  
 Cyrus. Consequently he out liv'd four Kings, viz. Nebuchad- 20  
 nezzar, Evilmerodoch, Belshazzar, and Darius. From this we  
 may calculate his great age. For consider ; from several corroborat-  
 ing circumstances we may with those learn'd chronologers Bishops  
 Lloyd and Louth, infer that he was about twenty years of age  
 when with others he was led captive to Babylon : this, added to the  
 seventy years captivity, which terminated in the first year of King  
 Cyrus's reign,\* makes him 90 years of age even then. But we  
 find him prophesying two or three years after that time, namely, in  
 the third year of Cyrus's reign, chap. x. 1. And after that again  
 in chapters xi and xii. So that at the time of his death, Daniel was  
 probably nearer an 100 than 90 years of age.

### *Practical Remarks and Inferences.*

1. How wise was K. Nebuchadnezzar, tho' an heathen, in se-  
 lecting and employing the fittest instruments for the management  
 of his government, even men skilled in all knowledge and wisdom,  
 v. 4. How commonly do persons highly qualified for public sta-  
 tions spend and end their days in obscurity, while others, utterly  
 unfit for them, make shift to scramble up to them. This, as Solo-  
 mon observes, is one of those evils which are often seen under the  
 sun. But let not this induce us to impeach God or Providence ;  
 for this inequality often proceeds from the ignorance or partiality of

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those

\* Jer. xxix. 10.—Extra 1.



those who have honorable and lucrative places to dispose of: or from the well known self-conceit and intruding forwardness of those who are least qualified for them; as well as from the self-denying modesty of others who are most qualified.

2. Must the young candidates for preferment pass through three years education, discipline, and regimen, before they be admitted into the King of Babylon's palace and royal presence (v. 5.); can sinners then stupidly imagine that a few pangs of remorse, also a few eager wishes and prayers extorted by a dread of hell, and destitute of love to God and holiness, are in the last hours of life sufficient preparatures for entering the infinitely more magnificent palace of heaven, and standing before Jehovah's all glorious throne? How wise and sagacious are sinners in judging what's proper in respect of earthly things; but how stupid in discerning what's fit or unfit in heavenly matters!

3. What noble patterns of temperance and selfdenial were the Hebrew youths recorded in this chap. To refrain from delicious morsels when like Barzillai, old age hath pall'd and blunted our appetites, 2 Sam. xix. 35; or when pinching want or forbidding laws place them out of our reach; nothing of all this is a virtue or self-denial. But this was not the case of these young men whose youthful age gave them an exquisit relish for animal gratifications; and from whom delicate fare was so far from being withheld, that it was provided to their hand, and so urg'd upon them by a royal mandate, that it was perilous to refuse it: yet such was their self-denial that they did refuse it; being influenced by the maxims of a wiser K. than Nebuchadnezzar, who said, "Be not desirous of dainties, for they are deceitful meat." Prov. xxiii. Be it known; the honour of religion and safety of the soul make it needful for all, especially young people, whose relish for animal gratifications is so strong, not to hanker immoderately after them; much less to place their chief felicity in them. For when the flesh is highly indulg'd and pamper'd, that better part, the soul, is always starv'd and injur'd. Oh! my countrymen, let us beware, lest that abounding tide of wealth, which of late has pour'd upon us, thro' the channel of a most prosperous trade, carry us into the gulf of luxury, and drown us in perdition.

4. How wisely and graciously has the God of nature order'd it, that a plain and coarse diet, which lies within the reach of the poor, should be as wholesome and nutritive as royal dainties. The bodies of Daniel and his three friends were in as good liking when their chief diet was herbs, parched peas, and lentiles, call'd pulse in this chap. as others were who fared sumptuously every day. —But was not this case somewhat miraculous? Be it so: yet many such miracles may be seen on any day, in the blooming faces and features, and in the health and strength of thousands, who have mean lodgings, and live on coarse, and sometimes scanty food. Let this consideration induce the poor not merely to submit to their coarse and scanty fare, but even to be thankful for it. Christians, tho' your tables be furnish'd with no better food than that herb-pottage, which Elisha set before the sons of the prophets, do not murmur, but cheerfully ask a Divine blessing upon it, and return cordial thanks for it, always rememb'ring that scripture proverb, “ a dinner of green herbs, *thro' a Divine blessing*, is as savoury and nourishing “ to the labouring poor, as a stalled ox is to the pamper'd rich.”

5. If a bounteous Divine hand feeds and strengthens the body with the plainest and most simple food; why not the soul with the plainest and most simple doctrine. Be assured that the plainest food is always most salutary for souls as well as bodies. When souls are savingly converted, 'tis by what the Apostle emphatically stiles the simplicity of the Gospel. But too many resemble full fed squemish Epicures, who chiefly hanker after delicacies; the garnishings of oratory; or sprightly fallies of wit.

Lastly. How strangely, how unexpectedly were these Hebrew Youths advanced from a deep state of captivity and slavery, to an high rank of honour and preferment in a royal palace! v. 19. But ah! little did they know how soon they must sink back into a condition more deplorable than that which they emerg'd out of. However, that fore knowledge was wisely, yea, graciously conceal'd from them, as it is from the generality of short-sighted mortals in similar cases. Were we to foresee a calamity a long time before its arrival, our painful sensations would be doubled; first in a distressing expectation; and a second time in an actual feeling of it. On the other hand, were any happy event to be known by us beforehand,

hand, our eager expectations would suck out all its sweetness, and leave us little besides an empty husk to feed upon, when it came to be possessed.

## CHAP. II. SECTION I.

### *King Nebuchadnezzar's Ominous Dream.*

Ver. 1 **A**ND in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar,\* Nebuchadnezzar dreamed dreams, where with his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him.

Tho' Nebuchadnezzar was the most potent Monarch in the east, there were two things he could not govern. He could not with a prevailing voice say to sleep, "Come whenever I need thee;" nor to dreams, "Depart whenever ye disturb me." Here we find this great Monarch distressed with dreams which drove sleep from him. Now, so extraordinary, so pointed and expressive are some dreams as clearly indicates them to be ominous and foreboding. Such did Nebuchadnezzar's

\* Objection. How could this be only the 2d year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, seeing he had conquer'd Jerusalem and captivated its inhabitants three years before; as is evident from the time prefixed for Daniel's schooling before he was now admitted into the King's presence, Dan. 1. 5. 'Tis answered; they who are nonplust'd with this objection do not consider that it was indeed three years since Nebuchadnezzar captivated Jerusalem; but only two since he began his reign at Babylon. For the Jewish captivity is expressly said to be in the 3d year of Jehoiachin's reign, Dan. 1. 1. Whereas young Nebuchadnezzar did not mount the throne of Babylon before the 4th year of the Jewish King's reign as is asserted in Jer. xxv. 1. The truth is, Nebuchadnezzar's Father reign'd a whole year in Babylon after he sent this his Son against Jerusalem, as the accurate Priedaux repeatedl proves out of Jewish History, in Vol. 1. Part 1.



Nebuchadnezzar's present dream appear to him : therefore having Ven-  
 summons'd together all his Magicians, Astrologers and Sorcerers,  
 he commanded them to shew him what his dream was, and what it 2  
 portended ; for he rightly concluded that if they could not divine  
 what had occur'd so lately as last night, how could they foretell  
 things which might not perhaps happen in a long time. This strain  
 of discourse so gravell'd the Chaldean fortune-tellers, that they con-  
 fessed their ignorance of what the King had dream'd ; yet at the  
 same time ridiculously pretended to a power of interpreting his  
 dream ; i. e. they could do the greater, but not the lesser feat.  
 This barefac'd shuffle in these fortune-tellers, raised such suspicions 4  
 in the King, that he in effect called them a pack of knaves, whose  
 sole aim was to amuse and deceive him. Therefore he began to be 5 &c.  
 so sharp with them as to threaten to make public examples of them  
 if they would not interpret his dream immediately.——To this  
 the Chaldean prognosticators reply, that his Majesty's demand was 9  
 so unreasonable that no other King or Lord did ever impose a task  
 equal to it upon any of his Magicians or Astrologers. For, say  
 they, " not a man on earth can shew the King's dream ; but only 10  
 the God's whose dwelling is not with flesh."—Flesh ! that dark in- 11  
 terposing veil which surrounds mortals, and conceals so many future  
 objects and events from them. Now the rising waves of Nebuch-  
 adnezzar's wrath meeting with this second check foamed still the  
 more, and roared out a decree dooming his Magicians and Astro-  
 logers to a very shocking death, and their houses to an heap of ruins. 3  
 The prophet Daniel getting intelligence of the King's sanguinary 12  
 decree ; and himself being one of his waiting men in the royal pa-  
 lace, he took the opportunity of telling him that he would engage  
 to reveal the dream, if his Majesty would but allow him a little time 16  
 for it. This proposal being agreed upon, Daniel took his three  
 countrymen along with him into a private place, there to ask coun-  
 sel of the Lord by prayer. And indeed prayer is one of the best 17  
 helps not only for sanctifying a depraved heart, but for enlightening 18  
 a dark mind. Not only when we are in want of holiness, but of  
 wisdom too we should ask it of God. Ja. 1. 5. That knowledge  
 which is convey'd not from the distant stream, but from the foun-  
 tain is always surest, sweetest, and purest.——Daniel, having  
 ask'd counsel of God by prayer, he retired to bed, where he  
 dreamed

Ver. dreamed the King's dream with the interpretation of it. This so  
 overjoy'd him that he acquainted his companions with it next morn-  
 ing; who on their bended knees join'd him in that thanksgiving  
 10 prayer which he thus put up—"Blessed be the name of God for-  
 ever and ever, who revealeth deep and secret things; who knoweth  
 21 what is in darkness, tho' himself be the Father of Lights. I thank  
 22 and praise thee O thou God of my fathers, who hast made known  
 23 unto me, what I desired of thee."—After the pious prophet had  
 sent up his thanksgiving prayer to the King of Heaven, he, like a  
 dutiful subject, went next to his earthly Sovereign, to tell him his  
 24 dream and what it imported. And with what modesty did he this!  
 28 He did not boastingly tell him that his own penetrating sagacity had  
 discover'd this secret; or that he came to the knowledge of it by  
 29 an accurate investigation of the Stars last night. No, said Daniel,  
 all my knowledge of this affair was imparted to me by the Deity  
 30 whose dwelling-place is infinitely above the Stars.

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

11 What an humiliating lesson doth the beginning of this chapter  
 teach us! namely, that no condition, tho' ever so prosperous, that  
 no station tho' ever so exalted, that no situation, how pleasant and  
 easy soever can effectually secure us from and raise us above all trou-  
 ble in this world: neither royal thrones or palaces, neither soft beds  
 or balmy sleep can do it. To what crosses, dangers, and disasters  
 are we expos'd during the busy scenes of the day! and when we re-  
 tire to bed at night, and have shut the door, we cannot shut out  
 either death, danger, disease, or distress: Nay when sleep has  
 closed our eyes, lock'd up our senses, and cut off all communica-  
 tion and converse between us and this miserable world, we lye open  
 to distressing dreams, which, tho' but imaginary evils, convey real  
 and painful feelings to the mind. An instance of this sort stands in  
 full view before us. How miserably was the grand Monarch of  
 Babylon tossed and disturb'd in his mind while he lay fast asleep on  
 a bed of state! v. 1. And soon after we find him harass'd a 2d  
 time with a dream still more disquieting ch. iv. 4. 5. "I Nebuchad-  
 nezzar was at rest in my house, and flourishing in my palace: I saw  
 a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed and the

the visions of my head troubled me." It seems not all his royal treasure could bribe away troubles; nor could all his life guards fence them off. Little do mankind know, little do they consider what uneasiness of mind, and how many secret troubles invade even those who live in external pomp and grandeur. Little do we see all that heart corroding grief which lyes concealed under the softest silks and velvets.

2. What a pity was it that a grand eastern Monarch who governed so many millions of subjects should at the same time betray so much weakness as not to govern his own passions; but permit both them and his tongue to break out into the greatest extravagancies: nor could all the remonstrances of reason check them v. 12. How well would it have been for this King to attend unto the wise maxim of a Brother King, "He that is slow to wrath is better than the mighty: and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Prov. xvi. 32. But alas while passion sits in the throne, reason is always trampled under foot; and as one said, "'tis very common for those who cannot be convinced by reason, to be exasperated by it."

3. From Daniel's thanksgiving prayer in the 20th and subsequent verses we infer that thanksgivings for mercies received should be as copious free and constant as petitions for mercies needed. Mere sordid selfishness may drive us to God's door for the purpose of begging a favour; whereas it must be an higher and nobler principle that can bring us thither in order to give thanks for one. But Daniel was as solicitous to return thanks for a mercy already receiv'd, as he had been to petition for it. And what mercy did he return thanks for?—A mere temporal one relating to this world—And did he think that a sufficient motive to thankfulness? What superior thanks should we render for a discovery of those Divine truths which concern our interest and happiness in both worlds; I mean a glorious gospel, a glorious redemption, and a great and glorious salvation; a glorious gospel in which mercy and truth meet together; in which righteousness and peace embrace each other; a gospel which brings glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good will towards men. This was a glorious plan indeed; and moreover so deeply



laid in Jehovah's eternal breast, and in his eternal councils as no Grecian Philosophy or Chaldean Astrology could ever discover.

4. What a shining pattern of humility and self abasement was Daniel! Tho' the discoveries made by him far surpassed every thing that the Chaldean Sages could pretend to (notwithstanding Chaldea was more expert in the art of divination than any other nation under heaven) yet how far was he from self-applause: As for me, said Daniel, this secret was not reveal'd to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living: but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets. v. 28, 30. Observe, this humble man disclaim'd all self merit and self praise; and transferr'd it to him unto whom alone it was due, even to God. The Apostle Paul had imbibed the like humble spirit when he said "It was not I who did this or that great exploit, but the grace of God which was given me." Be it known all self-exalting self-righteous professors are guilty of the worst sacrilege, seeing they rob God of the choicest jewel in his crown, namely his glory.

## P A R T II.

*Daniel Interpreteth the King's Dream; and is advanced.*

v. 31, &c. to the end.

Ver. **I**N the former part of this Ild. chap. we found a numerous tribe of Chaldean Magicians and Astrologers convened by the King for the purpose of interpreting his very significant and prophetic dream. But as all of them were nonplussed by it, young Daniel the Jew was sent for, who here stands before the King and freely undertakes the task; not indeed of himself, but in a firm reliance  
30 on the Father of lights, that source of all true wisdom. After a few modest apology's he thus begins—"As for thee O King thy thoughts on thy bed of slumbers turn'd upon state matters; more particularly you were musing what would become of the empire of the world after your decease, and who must be your successor,  
Now

Now your dream solved that case ; for it pointed out the qualities Ver.  
of those who would come to the throne after you ; and the condition  
in which they would leave the kingdom to their successors. In your 31  
dream you imagin'd that you saw an huge image whose colour was  
transcendently bright and charming, but its figure exceeding terrific.  
In appearance it had an head of gold, the finest of mettals ; its 32  
shoulders and arms were of silver ; the belly and thighs consisted of  
brass ; the legs and feet of iron. This was the former part of your 33  
dream, which I shall interpret before I proceed to the latter. By  
the golden head, O King is meant your royal self, who in wealth 37  
and grandeur art as far superior to other Kings as gold excels silver 38  
and brass. Besides your metropolitan city Babylon, on account  
of its grandeur and opulence, is justly stil'd the golden city, Isa.  
xiv. 4. Again, by the two silver arms of this great image, you are  
to understand two eastern kings, viz. Darius the Mede and Cyrus  
the Persian, whose kingdoms are as inferior to yours as silver is to 39  
gold ; yet will subdue yours. But afterwards their empire, tho'  
double, will be subdued by another King marching a brave army  
out of the west, viz. Alexander the Great, King of Greece, which  
is called in v. 39. a kingdom of brass ; because according to the re-  
peated testimony of Homer, who was nearly contemporary with  
Daniel, this kingdom sheath'd its Soldiers in armour of brass. But  
to proceed, The legs of this gygantic image, which in appearance  
consisted of iron, represented a fourth kingdom namely the Roman  
empire, which would grow stronger than the Grecian, even as iron 40  
is a stronger mettal than brass. This Roman empire, represented by  
legs of iron, is here said to branch itself into toes compos'd partly 41  
of iron, and partly of brittle clay ; for by means of intestine dissen-  
sions, the Roman empire was at last split into ten different factions  
and parties ; and thereby extremely weaken'd\* Thus I have confi-  
dered the four empires represented by the four different parts of Ne- 42  
buchadnezzar's visionary image ; the last of which was the Roman.  
What occur'd under that empire is thus emphatically set forth—  
An

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\* In Rev. xviii. these ten toes, which refer to the divided empire of Rome are express'd by ten horns which grew on a beast having seven heads ; by which is meant Rome standing on seven hills, said the Angel to St. John. ix. 9.

Ver. An huge stone cut out of a rocky mountain without hands did in Nebuchadnezzar's dream roll down with such a rapid force that it broke to pieces the wonderful image which he had been gazing at, and ground it into powder, "which was soon carried away like chaf before the driving wind"—† But tho' the great image was  
 35 thus demolish'd, the stone which crush'd it was so far from being  
 43 damag'd "that it grew into the amazing size of a vast mountain; yea it soon cover'd the whole surface of the earth." That this stone represented Messiah-Christ might be argued from the celebrated prophecy of dying Jacob, who in Gen. xlix. 24. expressly calls him—"The SHEPERD, the STONE OF ISRAEL, who sprang from the mighty God of Jacob."—Under the same emphatic emblem of a stone he is exhibited in Psa. cxviii. 22, Isa. xxviii. 16. But when did this wonderful stone, cut out of a mountain without hands, smite and demolish the image? 'Tis answer'd; at the time that the iron empire of Rome had conquer'd the three fore-mentioned eastern empires; and had subjugated the greatest part of the known world; which was when Christ was born Luke 2. 1. then did image worship begin its downfal; and then did the glorious gospel kingdom commence which is thus describ'd, "In those days shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall  
 44 never be destroy'd." But to proceed; The King of Babylon having now receiv'd such an extraordinary interpretation of his dream as he judg'd to be above the capacity of a mere man, he was thereby induc'd to pay the Interpreter more than human honour  
 46 and homage—"Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face and worshipped Daniel," (i. e. paid him an inferior sort of worship or homage according to a prevailing custom in eastern countries; of which we have several specimens in sacred Writ. Not the Nebuchadnezzar

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† Ground it to powder) To this our Saviour manifestly alludes when having stiled himself the head corner stone predicted in Psa. cxviii. he immediately added—"Whoever shall fall on this stone, i. e. stumble at it thro' unbelief, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, viz. in a way of future punishment, it shall grind him to powder, i. e. utterly destroy him. Matt. xxi. 44. alluding to a custom of grinding stones into powder.



adnezar took Daniel to be a real, much less supreme God. For in Ver. the very next v. he asserts that he also had a God; and that a discovery of the foresaid dream proceeded from him rather than from Daniel. Consequently not Daniel but the Deity enshrined within him was the chief object of the Kings worship—"Of a truth, says he, your God is a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this."—After this transaction, the 2d. chap. concludes as the first did, with fresh and increasing honours conferr'd by the King on Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; whom in the very next chap. (such is the fickleness of man) we see consign'd by him to martyrdom flames.

### *Practical Remarks and Inferences.*

1. Nebuchadnezzar's visionary image which consisted of so many different materials, exhibits instructive documents of those different characters which subsist among mankind. In the life of man youth, as one observes, is an head of gold; but in a few years it sinks down into old age, that clay-like period of life, when the decrepid body must soon mix with real clay. And as the image in this chap. emblemizeth different periods of life; so also different ages of the world. The first age of the world began with an head of gold; therefore even heathen authors stil'd it the golden age. Human nature being then pure as the gold of Ophir; but how is that gold become dim! and what a large mixture of iron and clay is there in man's nature; which is therefore stiled the iron age. Furthermore, in Nebuchadnezzar's image we have an affecting emblem of the rich miser who retains a strange mixture of gold, silver and clay in his disposition. Gold and silver are the idols which he loves with all his heart and serves with all his strength, but his disposition is earthly and clay-like; and his hard heart is almost devoid of compassionate feelings both to the needy and miserable. But this medley composition must be dissolv'd. The hands, originally made of clay, must soon lose their eager grasp of the beloved gold and silver. Furthermore, the same compound image in this chap. fitly emblemizes all specious self-repugnant hypocrites, who, being devoid of spiritual life, are actuated in religious matters by mere external springs like puppets on a stage. Their heads like a golden bowl contain curious notions and speculations;

tions; but their feet, which should move in the paths of duty, resemble restive iron or clay. In a word, every hypocrite like the image in this chap. is an inconsistent medley in which the head and heart, the lips and life are a perpetual contradiction to one another.

2. What a significant emblem was Messiah-Christ of that wonderful stone mention'd in v. 35. For was that cut out of a mountain without hands? so was Messiah-Christ produced by an extraordinary generation, in which no human hand had any share. Again, did this mysterious stone smite, demolish, and in some sort annihilate Nebuchadnezzar's image. This plainly denoted that Christ by his gospel would in time destroy all idols and image worship; which prediction was signally verified. History assures us that in the space of 70 years after the birth of Christ and the publication of his Gospel, idolatry and image worship were banish'd from many large Heathen Kingdoms. And tho' in some following centuries it crept back again, and mingl'd even with Christianity in the Church of Rome; we have the happiness to see its power and influence decline apace every year; and that too not by acts of violence or instruments of cruelty, which the rigid jewish dispensation too much encourag'd, and which after ages too often practis'd; but by gentle methods; therefore 'tis observable that tho' Daniel was a Jew; yet when in the present chap. he predicted Gospel times, he dropt the rigid spirit of a Jew, and catched the milder and better spirit of a Christian; so that when Nebuchadnezzar had doom'd all the idolatrous Magicians in Babylon to destruction, Daniel turned intercessor for them, saying, "Destroy them not." v. 24. Hear this O ye rigid of every party, who murder in your hearts those whom ye dare not murder with the hand: and learn from <sup>it</sup> a better and more merciful spirit.

3. In Nebuchadnezzar's visionary image we have an instructive emblem of the flattering, deceitful, and perishing nature of all sub-lunary enjoyments. View the head of this image and see how majestic it stands, and how it glitters with polish'd gold: but trace it farther, and it appears still baser and baser, till it terminates in sordid clay. Thus is it with all splendid earthly enjoyments, the farther we enter into them, the more vanity and vexation of spirit may we often discover in them. Again, as this great image, whose aspect was

so bright, and whose figure was so formidable, was soon calcin'd, and reduced to atoms by the fall of a single stone; so will it be with the fading glories of this transitory world. What a brilliant figure do some mortals make while they strut along the stage of life; especially when they are plumed with honours, or enriched with golden store. But how soon doth all this greatness and grandeur vanish, how soon it is laid in the dust! Job xx. 8, 9th. "They shall flee away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea they shall be chased away as a vision of the night: the eye which saw them shall see them no more; neither shall their place any more behold them." But why doth all this worldly greatness and grandeur stand no longer? why doth all this silver and gold shutter down so soon? Certainly because it resembles Nebuchadnezzar's image, whose golden head and silver breast and arms stood on legs and feet of clay. What feeble props do bear up this world's grandeur? even frail bodies made of dust, which soon return to dust again. Even the most splendid funeral pomp, as our burial service emphatically expresseth it, ends with "Dust to dust."

4. Seeing such extraordinary virtue is ascrib'd to the Divine Stone mentioned in this chap. and such mighty achievements were wrought by it, let both Pastors and People make it their foundation stone to build on. Whilst ceremonial Priests and legalizing Scribes reject this corner stone which the Lord hath laid in Zion Ps. cxviii. 22, let Ministers of the Gospel build all their doctrine upon it: let the People also build their pardon and title to heaven; yea all their very obedience and good works on the same wonderful stone: and can any thing be a greater encouragement so to do than that precious promise in Isa. xxviii. 16. "Thus saith the Lord; behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation, he that believeth in him shall not be confounded."

5. Let all who esteem it a privilege to build their hopes of heaven on the foundation stone here describ'd, account it both their privilege and duty to become loyal and obedient subjects of the gospel-kingdom which is equally describ'd and has equal stress laid on it in the same chap.—"In those days of the Messiah, saith Daniel



Ver. the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; for it shall stand for ever."—It can never be destroyed either by human power or policy: the combined powers of earth and hell cannot deprive the subjects of their Prince, nor the Prince of his subjects. Are we then subjects of this kingdom? If we are; we have been made a willing people in a day of Divine power Ps. 110. The habitual dominion of sin hath been subdued: our wills have bowed to the ruling Sceptre of King Jesus: and that kingdom of God hath been set up within us which consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Rom. xiv. 17.

### C H A P. III.

#### *Babylonish Idolatry, and Jewish Martyrdom.*

**N**EBUCHADNEZZAR the King made an Image of Gold, whose height was three <sup>score</sup> Cubits, and the breadth thereof six Cubits; he set it up in the Plain of Dura, &c.

Ver. 1. 'Twas the saying of a very great man that our waking dreams are more foolish and hurtful than those which seize us when asleep. Of this we have a striking specimen in the present and foregoing chap. In the former we found Nebuchadnezzar only dreaming of an image when asleep. In his present waking dream he actually commands an image to be made and worshiped. To increase a reverential regard for this new idol it must be monstrously large and stately, even thirty yards high. The more to excite the love and esteem of the adoring multitude, it must be made of the metal which mankind most esteems and doats on. So soon as this image was made and set up, it was by the King's mandate solemnly consecrated. At this consecration all the Princes, Governors, Captains, Judges, Treasurers, Counsellors, Sheriffs, and Deputy Rulers of the kingdom, must be present with an intent to confer the greater  
3 honour on this new made idol. Besides, Nebuchadnezzar might suppose that if he could prevail with the leading men in his kingdom

to pay homage to this new idol, the lower class of people would Ver.  
soon follow their example; especially when the King's edict ran in 4  
these thre'ning terms—"Then the King's Herald cried aloud: O  
people, nations, and languages, to you it is commanded, that at 5  
what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, fluit, harp, sackbut, psal-  
tery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship 6  
the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the King hath set up: and  
whoso falleth not down and worshipeth shall the same hour be cast 7  
into the midst of a burning furnace."—Here two of the most stimu-  
lating motives are presented to draw the King's subjects into a com-  
pliance with this new species of idolatry, namely *delight* and *terror*.  
If neither a grand concert, nor an huge image glittering with bur-  
nish'd gold had charms sufficient to allure some dull souls into a com-  
pliance with this new mode of worship, the heat of a raging furnace  
must needs frighten the most stupid into it, and thus it prov'd. So  
soon as the grand concert call'd them to public prayer's, all the 8  
people fell prostrate, and worshiped the golden image; three cap- 9  
tive Jews excepted, namely, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego;  
these accounted themselves not bound by the command of an earth-  
ly King which oppos'd that express command of an infinitely great-  
er.—"Thou shalt not make any graven image, to bow down to 10  
and serve it." Accordingly an information was soon lodg'd against 11  
these three youths by a set of spies, who in order to aggravate their 12  
pretended crime, and incense Majesty as much as possible against  
them, do first remind the King what singular favours he had conferr'd  
on those ungrateful wretches. That tho' they were vagabond fo-  
reigners, slaves, and men of a despis'd nation and religion, yet, to  
their great grief, the King had set them over the affairs of the pro-  
vince of Babylon. 'Twas therefore insufferable insolence for those  
to disobey the King's command who had shared so liberally of the  
King's favours: besides the high station to which they had been  
advanc'd would make their refusal a bad precedent to others, and  
encourage rebellion. Thus bad Princes, as Mr. Hensy remarks,  
who are sufficiently prejudic'd against good people already, have too  
many ill disposed persons about them to increase those prejudices.—  
Tho' the King's spirit was now sufficiently ruffled by the preju-  
diced account which his envious courtiers had given of these He-

Ver. brew youths, this did not prompt him to denounce a rash and hasty sentence against them ; but first he summonsed them before him, and ask'd them whether they were indeed so ungrateful for past royal favours, and so regardless of present royal authority, as not to bow to the magnificent image which he had erected at such a prodigious  
 14 expence—and which, in case of a refusal, doom'd them to a fiery furnace in the short space of an hour ; and adds he who is that God  
 15 that can deliver you out of my hands." The King's demands being thus peremptory, and his minaces thus formidable, an immediate compliance on the part of these impeached Jews might have been expected ; or some long deliberation and self debate before they could return a negative answer in a case of life and death. But when the whole affair turn'd on this one hinge, whether God or man must have the preference in being obey'd—deliberation and demur was sinful and dangerous. Therefore they return'd this heroic  
 16 reply—" We are not anxious O King about the thre'tning you denounce against us." And indeed they who make duty their first and chief care need not dread any consequences. But what inspir'd these Hebrew youths with all this fortitude ? Certainly a steady faith and confidence in God : this enabl'd them to view death in its  
 17 most horrid forms with the utmost calmness and fortitude, and to  
 18 say " Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us ; and he will deliver us out of thy hand O King." But how ? Either by rescuing our death devoted bodies out of thy severe hands, or by receiving our departing spirits into his own more gracious hands—What an heroic faith was this ! a faith so strong as to verify the Apostle's assertion. " By faith they quenched the violence of fire, Heb. xii.  
 34.—To return. This bold heroic reply of the youths added fuel to the King's wrath ; and the King's wrath added fuel to his fur-  
 19 nace, for he commanded it to be heated seven times hotter than be-  
 20 fore. At the same time he charged the stoutest men in his army to throw the three youths into it. This they did with so much eagerness, that venturing too near the mouth of the furnace, the flames righteously destroy'd them while they were unrighteously attempting to destroy others. Thus these cruel executioners of a cruel decree were justly punish'd not only in the very act of their sin, but by it. The Hebrew youths being thus cast into the midst of such a raging  
 furnace,



furnace, it might have been expected that their bodies would be consumed to ashes very soon; but amazing consideration! not so much as a single hair of their heads or any part of their clothes was sing'd or smelt of the fire. Now the sight of this astonish'd all the Spectators, and none more than the King, who it seems had an heart to be present at this shocking scene, of which himself had been the author. Consequently, upon his looking into the furnace he with amazement call'd out to his attendants, saying; did we not cast only three men bound into the furnace? and lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the furnace. Observe (walking in it.) This, as Dr. Gill justly remarks, shews at once the greatness of the furnace, and the great malignity of him that order'd it, also the entire composure of the persons who walk'd serenely in it as in a spacious garden—'Tis no ways needful to enquire whether by, Son of God, here Nebuchadnezzar understood that illustrious personage who about 500 years after this time became incarnate. This Babylonish King, I apprehend, was too ignorant and carnal to understand that great mystery of godlyness—"God manifest in the flesh," Perhaps all he intended by this strange expression was, that tho' the fourth personage whom he saw walking in the furnace was in an human form (therefore he expressly calls him a man); yet so much Divinity and glory shone in his countenance, and his deportment was so majestic that he could not be one of our earth born race; but must needs be the offspring of some God. But after all, this wonderful personage might really be the Son of God, tho' Nebuchadnezzar might not know it. For when the forcerer Balaam, and Caiaphas and the frantic Demoniaes spake of Christ they were divinely prompted to utter great things concerning him which they did not clearly understand. See Num. xxiv. 17. John xi. 51. Matt. viii. 29. But to step forward. The strange spectacle which now appeared to Nebuchadnezzar in the furnace produc'd an equally strange change in that Monarch's mind both with respect to the true God and his martyrdom children, whom He was now as intent to call out of the glowing furnace as He had been to cast them into it, saying, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither." Hereupon they came forth in the sight and presence of many great personages. After this we find this heathen

Ver.

27

26

King

Ver. King blessing instead of blaspheming the God of the three martyrs for delivering those his faithful servants who trusted in Him, and for defeating his own impious designs against them. Lastly He publisheth an edict, forbidding all his subjects thro' his vast dominions to say any thing to the disparagement of the true God upon the severe penalty of having their bodies cut in pieces and their houses turned into an heap of ruins. A severe sentence verily, but quite suited to the severity of this King's temper!

### *Practical Remarks and Inferences.*

Let us now pause a while and consider what a strange phenomenon this chap. sets forth in the preservation of three religious youths amidst a raging furnace. The smoke did not sifle them! the flame did not burn them! the fire did not scorch them! Is not this too big to be credited? No, something similar hath occur'd in other cases. When the mind has been in a waste or intensely engag'd in deep study, it has been so abstracted from the interests of the body, as not to feel the uneasy gnawings of hunger. Yea thro' how many martyrs hath the love of God run with 'so strong a stream as has quench'd all painful feelings at the very time that martyrdom flames have been consuming their bodies. - But suppose the case before us cannot be accounted for without a miraculous interposition, who can deem it incredible that God should display his delivering power in an extraordinary way at a time when it had been so blasphemously challeng'd and defied by an heGoring Babylonian? And for whom could that extraordinary deliverance have been more deservedly wrought than for three upright youths, who rather chose to submit to the most tremendous death than displease a good God by consenting to the gross idolatry? And in what kingdom or country on earth could idolatry be more advantageously rebuked by a miracle than in Babylon which was peculiarly addicted to it? And on which of the four elements could that miracle be more sily wrought than on fire? That very element which eastern heathen nations adored as a Deity, did, we see, suspend its burning property at the command of Israel's God, and in some sort side with those who sided against idolatry.

2. What

2. What a remarkable instance have we in this chap. of the vast expence some Pagans are at in worshipping their Gods! Here was a single image thirty yards high, and all of pure gold erected with a design of opening heaven's gates with that massy key of gold; also attended with a sumptuous concert of music to soothe and quiet troubled consciences. Will heathens then part with so much precious earthly substance for mansions in heaven? And are many professing christians averse to apply almost any part of their property to acts of piety and charity? Oh King of Babylon, how wilt thou at the great reckoning day rise in judgment against and condemn penurious christians of the present generation!

3. What little sense of God and true religion was there in the world when almost a whole kingdom was so soon brought over into the grossest idolatry! Had the King of Babylon commanded all his subjects to worship the God of Heaven in spirit and in truth, how few would have obeyed his orders? But a command to worship a lifeless image meets with almost universal compliance. What a proneness is there in mankind to model their worship not according to the dictates of reason, but from some sinister motive. Either human authority or human example, either tradition or custom or worldly interest over-rule most people in matters of this sort. The main part of Nebuchadnezzar's subjects judg'd it most eligible to be of the religion which their King and government were of, whatever it was. 'Tis upon this principle that pagan idolatry reigns in so many kingdoms, Mahometanism in many others, and popery in others; but pure undefiled religion in very few. Whatever charms the eye and ear influenceth mankind more strongly than what purifies the heart and regulates the life. This golden image and pompous consort drew together a larger assembly of worshipers in a few days than the gospel trumpet perhaps ever did in an equal number of months or years. A sad omen this of the wretched depravity and degeneracy of lapsed mankind!

4. How ill did it become the Babylonish Monarch to fall into such a violent passion as distorted his visage and prompted him to denounce such dreadful menaces merely because three or four men thro'



thro' all his vast dominions could not in conscience conform to his senseless mode of worship. As Mr. Henry saith, What an infelicity was it both to himself and subjects that he who was so mighty in one respect as to rule many nations, was so weak in another as not to rule his own spirit. They are certainly unfit to govern others who cannot govern their own passions.

5. In that noble and undaunted reply the Hebrew youths made to the King at so critical a season when nothing but thunder and lightning burst from the royal throne, we see the true spirit of martyrdom, which is bold, but not rash or fierce; and steady but not stiff or spiteful. Tho' a most unrighteous sentence was denounc'd against these inoffensive young men, and the most unmerciful death was allotted them, namely to be burnt alive, they stood firm to their God and his service; but were neither obstinate nor insolent. As the last quoted Expositor remarks, they did not break into any intemperate heats against their persecutors, nor affront or vilify those who worshipped the golden image; they neither rashly thrust themselves upon the fiery trial, nor dastardly shrunk from it when duly call'd to it; but stood fast, and quitted themselves like men and martyrs; being strong in the Lord and in the power of his might.

6. If we are ready to startle at Nebuchadnezzar's throwing some of his best subjects into a fiery furnace, what shall we think of our compassionate heavenly Father treating his most loving and dutiful children nearly the same way? But, strange as this appears, it may be accounted for by considering that the very same acts may be either eminently good or extremely bad according to the principle they proceed from, and the end aimed at. Nebuchadnezzar cast his subjects into the furnace from a principle of ill-will, and with the same intent that we cast fuel into the fire. But the Lord casteth his people into furnaces of affliction from a principle of love; and from similar motives that a founder casteth metals into a furnace, namely to refine them. Zech. xiii. "I will bring the third part thro' the fire, saith the Lord, and will refine them as silver."

7. When we consider the wonderful sight which Nebuchadnezzar obtain'd of the Son of God in the fiery furnace, how can we forbear

bear crying out—"Great is the mystery of godliness; God manifest in the flesh; seen of Angels; seen by old-testament Believers; yea, here seen by a wicked Pagan! 'Tis highly probable that it was the Son of God who made all the appearances recorded in the Old Testament, that for this purpose he assumed an human form (tho' not a gross human body) many ages before his incarnation. This Divine Personage who in Daniel's prophecy is repeatedly stiled *Messiah the Prince*; also *Son of God*, and *Son of Man*, is in other parts of the Old Testament more frequently call'd the *Angel of God's Presence*. Under this character he appear'd to Abraham who called him Lord, put up prayers to him, as the Sovereign disposer of human events. Gen. xviii. The name of Angel is also given to this Son of God in Ex. xxiii. but with such singular titles as are not applicable to a creature. v. 20, 21. "Behold I will send an Angel before thee, to bring thee to the place which I have prepar'd; obey his voice, and provoke him not, lest he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him."—Again, this glorious Personage who appear'd to Nebuchadnezzar in a glowing furnace seems to be the same Son of God who took up his station in the burning bush. Ex. iii. Accordingly he who is called Angel of the Lord in v. 2d is v. 4. stiled God. Yea, it was the same Divine Person that enshrin'd Himself in the fire-cloud pillar which fix'd its standing between the Cherubims above the Mercy-seat, and which on that account is call'd the Schechinah, or Shrine of the indwelling Deity: Just as that human nature of Christ, in which the fulness of the God-head bodily, is the New Testament Schechinah: for I find the Church of God in every age, both Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Christian, had a Schechinah of some kind, i. e. some visible symbol of the Deity. Hence, whenever worshipers appeared before the Mosaic Schechinah they are said to appear before God; and a sight of the former is call'd a sight of the latter, Num. xiv. 14. Thou Lord art seen face to face in the pillar of a cloud which standeth over them. And 'tis said that not only Moses, but the seventy Elders at one time, and the nobles of Israel at another, *saw God*, and did eat and drink, Ex. xxiv. 10, 11. They saw not the Divine Nature, but Divine Schechinah. Upon this principle Christ (that New Testament Schechinah) said "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. John xiv. 9.





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*Image Idolatry, and Heart-Idolatry,*  
CONSIDER'D, COMPARED, AND SELF-APPLIED,

BEING

A MEDITATION

On CHAP. III. 4, 5, 6, 7.

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**T**HEN an Herald cried aloud; to you it is commanded O people, nations and languages, that at what time ye hear the found of the cornet, fluit, harp, &c. and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the King hath set up: and who so falleth not down and worshipeth, shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and all the people fell down and worshiped the golden image.

Having ponder'd these words I find it difficult to determine whether the daring blasphemy of the Babylonish King, or the idolatry of his subjects was more astonishing. That any King on earth should daringly attempt to wrest the sceptre of the King of Heaven out of his hand, and usurp the throne of the most high by ruling the consciences of mankind—that the King of Babylon should claim a right to impose whatever worship he pleas'd upon his subjects—yea that the very God whom they were to worship must be of his own devising, his own making—a mere upstart God, but a few months

or

or days old—how unreasonable, unrighteous, and impious was all this! But if Nebuchadnezzar's decree was thus culpable, what must the penalty be by which he enforced it, viz. a being burn'd to death in a furnace? Certainly if this supposed Deity was impotent he deserv'd no worship, no regard; if omnipotent, he was abundantly able to kindle a furnace sufficiently hot for the contemnors of his worship, without being beholden to this hot headed Babylonian for one. Besides, what has persecution to do with the cause of God and truth? Firey faggots are very unfit wedges to open men's understandings. Error may fetch in such ungodly instruments; but Divine truth needs them not—Having consider'd the strange injunction which the King laid on his subjects, let me next consider their equally strange compliance with it. 'Tis said v. 7, that all people and nations under his government (three or four jewish foreigners excepted) fell down and worshiped the golden image. Strange that among so many millions, there was not one dissenting voice; not one that had sense enough to discern the folly of image worship, at least not integrity and courage sufficient to testify against it and oppose it! When I think of this my spirit is stirred in me as St. Paul's was when he saw the abounding idolatry of Athens; And I cannot forbear exclaiming—What stupid creatures were these who flock'd together from all parts of the Babylonish empire to worship a lump of glittering metal dug out of the earth! What a wonder was it that a jealous God did not bury this rival Deity and all its impious votaries under the ruins of some dire judgment, while they were in the very act of so gross and false a worship! But instead of censuring and condemning these Pagans who never enjoy'd gospel-light and privileges for their better information; let me turn my views to the christian world; perhaps I may there find as many who adore and devote themselves to golden idols, as now prostrated themselves before this of Nebuchadnezzar. Indeed multitudes in christian countries perform no acts of real worship; nay do seldom if ever resort to any place of worship: and when they do, perhaps they pretend not to raise their adoring thoughts and affections to their maker. Now is not a total neglect of right worship as criminal in the sight of God as the zealous practice of a false one? Even a false worship betokens some sense of a Deity and some concern and endeavour

endeavour to please Him, tho' thro' ignorance the right object of worship be mistaken. As to right worship there can be none where the thoughts and the affections are not engag'd in it. Now are not the thoughts of many so little engag'd in Divine worship that at the close of the service they can scarcely recollect what they were thinking of while it was conducted? and as to the affections, how often do those adulterously embrace some dunghill idol-lust when they should have been moving with a winged speed towards Him whom they are commanded to love with all their hearts. Mark xii. 30. And are not these very humiliating considerations, teaching us to sit in judgment upon the spiritual idolatry of our own hearts, rather than severely judge the image idolatry of heathens?—But is it not some satisfaction that we do not worship images? Most certainly it is; and very thankful should we be that we were not nurs'd up in idolatry in an heathen land. But while we are thankful for an exemption from one species of idolatry, 'tis unsafe to lose an humble sense of another, namely heart idolatry; which is certainly committed when we love and serve any heart-sin more than God. Hence the proud man's idol is dear self which he more admires and aims at pleasing than his maker. Again, intemperance is call'd idolatry, Phil. iii. 5. So is avarice, Coll. iii. 5. They in whose hearts avarice rules are as justly chargeable with idolatry as the Israelites with respect to the golden calf. What doth it signify whether gold be moulded into the shape of a calf, or man; and whether it bears the image of the King of Babylon or King of Great Britain: the internal homage paid to the idol may be nearly the same, tho' the external form of the idol may be different. If worldly wealth, that Mammon-God, as our Saviour terms it, has the uppermost seat in our thoughts and affections, and is served with all our strength, in this case it sits in the seat of God, and is idoliz'd; it has also as much service paid it as the God of heaven claims. Even an unenlighten'd Pagan discover'd this, when, having been cheated out of his property by some tricking, avaricious christians, he held up a piece of gold in his hand, and with indignation exclaim'd "This Christians is the God whom ye worship." Thus upon enquiry I find the Christian world as justly chargeable with spiritual idolatry as the Pagan world is with image idolatry. And, if I mistake not the idolatry



latry of the former is in some instances attended with more aggravating circumstances than the latter. For first Idols of the heart are more dangerously situated than idol images; these like Nebuchadnezzar's image stand at some distance without; whereas those stand within People's own hearts. Now the nearer any evil is, the more dangerous it is, because its influence is stronger. Consider further that the love and service given to an heart idol is more feeling and affectionate than what was given to this golden image. Nothing more than an outside homage, consisting in uplifted hands and bended knees was probably paid by these ignorant devotees to this glittering idol. Now thus much was given to their eastern Kings; yea nearly thus much do we give to our British Kings when we present petitions to them.—A 3d. aggravating circumstance in heart idolatry is its being more constant and continued than image worship. The task imposed on those who worship'd this golden idol was probably for a single time only; or if oftener; yet when the service was ended, all was over; Far otherwise is it with heart idolatry; this is a continued thing. Whether it be pride, avarice, or some sensual desires; these idols, if the utmost caution be not us'd, will break in and steal away our hearts in any place, tho' ever so sacred, and at any time, tho' ever so unseasonable; in the closet, in the house of God, yea at the Lord's table. Nay, without watchfulness, these idols will meet our thoughts and affections before we can get to our knees in prayer. Lastly; another enhancing circumstance attending heart idolatry is this: We have the most powerful motives to *dissuade* us from it; whereas the Babylonians had a very powerful motive to *persuade* them into image idolatry. A dreadful furnace stood behind them to drive them into idolatry; whereas a more formidable furnace *threatens* to deter us from it; besides a glorious heaven alluring us to its contrary duty.—And now O my soul what's the chief design of all this scrutiny into the nature of spiritual idolatry, but to enable thee to search thyself more effectually, and to try whether this serpentine iniquity has not crept into thine own heart. Let conscience say whether some idol hath not seized that throne in my heart which belong'd to Jehovah alone? Has it not, like "Anti-christ, sat in the throne of God, and exalted itself above all that is called God?" Has not far more of my time, strength, and spirits been devoted

to it than to the service of my adorable Creator, Redeemer, and incessant Preserver and Benefactor. When I have been prostrating myself in public or private prayer; and professing to worship Him who is a spirit, in spirit and truth, has not my deprav'd imagination forg'd many gross representations of God highly dishonorable to his pure nature? and have I not yielded to them? Or have not various creature objects suddenly started up in my mind, and stood between my loving Saviour and my soul, veiling his blessed countenance from me; and for a while drawing the whole stream of my thoughts and affections towards them? And do I after all account myself guiltless? Or does not the second commandment condemn me as well as idolatrous Babylon? And do I not hence discover an absolute need of a Divine Sanctifier to purify my polluted heart and its impure outflowings in God's service? Do I not equally need a Divine Saviour and sacrifice to atone for my best services, and to become an interposing barrier between me and flaming wrath—even that Divine Saviour whose grace and love so conspicuously shines forth in a subsequent verse of this chap. which is to be the delightful subject of the next meditation.

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*The Son of God supporting and solacing his People under their fiery trials: being a Meditation on Chap. III. 24, 25.*

**T**HEN Nebuchadnezzar the King was astonished and arose in haste; and said to his counsellors: Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the King: True O King: He answered and said, Lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt! And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.

What an amazing scene have we here! Let me, like Moses, "turn aside and see this great sight"—Yes, O my soul, a greater sight

fight than a bush burning and not consumed; namely three young men living, moving, walking, unhurt, unsing'd, untouch'd within a glowing furnace! But did I see only three men in it? nay behold a fourth! and He more illustrious than all the rest. Lo, said Nebuchadnezzar, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God! Here a large group of wonders present themselves.—As,

I. That wonderful Personage whom Nebuchadnezzar now saw walking amidst his fiery furnace with a God-like visage but an human form,

Was not this the same wonderful personage, who, as the Apostle strongly expresseth it, was in the form of God? yet for our sakes was made in the likeness of man.—O my soul, does not the God-like visage of this illustrious personage charm thee? Does not his grace melt thee? Or have I less feeling than this Babylonian, who, upon obtaining a sight of the Son of God, arose from his seat in rapturous astonishment? And consider, if this guilty monarch was so deeply affected when he saw the Son of God walk thro' a furnace in order to support and comfort three men only: would He not have been far more deeply affected had he seen this Son of God pass thro' a fire of law-wrath and bearing the most torturing pains, for the purpose of saving both him and us, yea millions, from a furnace infinitely more dreadful.—But to proceed.—Having contemplated one wonder held forth in the passage before me, an other riseth namely,

II. The appearance of the Son of God on earth before his incarnation and birth; even in the early days of the prophet Daniel.

Nay almost from the beginning of the world, as was shewn in a former paragraph. The reason seems to be this. So soon as human nature was deeply defil'd in consequence of man's original apostacy, it was inconsistent with the honour of God, and unsafe for deprav'd mankind, that the former should have any friendly dealings with the latter as an absolute God; but only a God in Christ. Hence



'tis suppos'd that all those appearances of the Deity, which we meet with in the Old Testament, were not the appearances of unveil'd Godhead ; for in that sense " No man hath seen God at any time," John i. 18. But the appearances of a God in Christ. And was not this a most striking demonstration how affectionately this Son of God loved the sons of men ; even to such a degree (so to speak) that he could not bear to be absent from them until the time prefix'd for the grand visit was to commence. How amply did this eternal Son of God verify those words in Prov. viii. " The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, before the earth ; I also rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth ; and my delights were with the Sons of men."—Yea, growing delights ; therefore after he had often convers'd with mankind in an aerial human form for many ages, as we have already seen, he vehemently desir'd, and at last obtain'd a still closer and more real union, by becoming bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh at his incarnation. Hence when the Spirit of prophecy invited Him to take his incarnation journey from heaven to earth, hear how his rejoicing heart exulted and echo'd back the Divine call—" Sacrifices and burnt offerings, (*viz. leuitical*) thou wouldest not ; a body hast thou prepared for me ; then said I ; lo I come ; i. e. to offer my blood and life a sacrifice for sin. ps. xl. 7 ; 8. Heb. x. Having consider'd the remarkably early time when the Son of God appeared : I proceed to another thing equally wonderful in this passage, viz.

III. The Person to whom He then made his appearance, namely, to a gross idolater and flaming persecutor.

Now tho' common sense seemingly remonstrates against this, the following reasons may be assign'd for it.

1st. It might be done with a design to confound and strike this royal personage with awe, by letting him see, that destitute and forlorn as these three martyrs seem'd to be ; who being foreigners, and of another religion, had not perhaps one friend or helper among all that croud which view'd their martyrdom ; yet they had a powerful

Divine

Divine associate and assistant, even within the furnace, whose God-like form and countenance declar'd Him an over-match for his persecutors, and abundantly able to revenge the injury now done to his suffering servants. Yea, as this awful personage appear'd to this royal persecutor while he was murdering three innocent youths; would not the sight thereof pierce his conscience, and make impressions on his mind and body, similar to what Shakspeare thus describes, as made on a murderer when a stern Ghost appear'd to him—"Enough to harrow up his soul:—Freeze his hot blood;—and make each hair of his head start up; and stand on an end, like quills upon the fretful porcupine."—Again the Son of God, that dear lover of souls, might make his appearance to this persecuting Monarch, for a similar cause that induc'd him to appear unto Saul, when he was touring away on his persecuting journey to Damascus, namely to convert him; and indeed it contributed something towards it, as the three last verses in this chap. indicate; and as will more fully appear in the next chap. Thus I have briefly consider'd three of those strange appearances which the passage before me holds forth to my admiring contemplations; namely that wonderful Personage who made his appearance—The person to whom that wonderful appearance was made—And the wonderful time when it was made. But the greatest wonder yet remains, viz.

#### IV. The strange place in which the Son of God made his appearance at this time, viz. in a fiery furnace.

There it was that Nebuchadnezzar saw an illustrious Personage passing to and fro, whose form was "like the Son of God"—I observe that the Babylonish Monarch did not see this God-like person walking thro' his august palace among the Princes and Peers of his realm: no, that idolatrous luxurious place and company was rather shun'd with abhorrence than approch'd with delight by the immaculate Son of God. Neither did Nebuchadnezzar see this God-like Personage walk thro' his hanging gardens suspended in the air; which in regard of curiosity and delight, were one of the seven wonders of the world. No, he saw the Son of God only in a burning furnace, there

there associating with three young martyrs, whose Divine graces and virtues charmed him more than all the fragrant plants and beautiful flowers which adorned the gardens of that eastern Monarch—  
 “ I see him walking in the burning furnace, and his form is like the Son of God said Nebuchadnezzar.” O wonderful grace ! amazing condescension ! For the Son of God to leave a palace in heaven, and come down to these terrestrial regions was amazingly condescending : but that He should attend upon and bear a part with his suffering people in their most wretched situations and conditions, even in a prison and glowing furnace, this was such astonishing grace that words are too scanty to express it, yea thoughts to conceive it.\*  
 Certainly nothing did ever equal it except when this darling of heaven hung on the torturing cross, and bare our sins in his own body on that accursed tree ; this latter was indeed the more affecting scene of the two. When this uncreated Son of God walked thro’ Nebuchadnezzar’s flaming furnace, He neither dropt a tear, nor breathed forth a groan ; neither felt pain, nor scorching heat : But when He passed thro’ a furnace in the garden of Gethsemane and on the torturing cross He groan’d, He wept ; was thrown into an agony and bloody sweat, and lifted up strong cries and tears. In the mean time which of us have such a close sticking friend as Christ ? If we resided in halls or palaces surrounded with plenty and splendor, people would crowd about us, professing friendship ; but which of them, like Christ, would visit us if the road lay thro’ a fiery furnace. And now after so many affecting scenes have passed in view before me, is it not high time to pause awhile and examine whether I account myself interested in these great events which I have been contemplating ; or whether I have consider’d them as matters of mere curiosity which only tend to amuse me ; but never to be acted over again in my own person. But am I sure of that ? Have I no scorching furnaces to pass thro’ ? No severe providential trials which deserve the name given them by an Apostle, *viz. fiery trials* ? Is not my body subject to many inflammatory distempers ; and my soul to Satan’s fiery darts ; also my character and good name to railing tongues set  
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\* *What tender sympathy is there in those words, Isa. lxiii. 9. In all their afflictions, He was afflicted ; and the Angel of his presence saved them.*



on fire of hell? Besides, is not death a furnace which I and all mankind must enter into? And what if something more than a common natural death should be my lot? viz. Martyrdom? Flames of persecution have been repeatedly kindled in this christian country, as well as in heathen Babylon. And what has been may again be. But why do fears and dark boding now begin to rise in my throbbing breast? If nature shudders at the foresight of Martyrdom, grace can prepare me for it, support me under it, and carry me thro' it. So that whenever God calls me forth to a martyr's conflict, I trust He will inspire me with a martyr's spirit: and I need it not before. Besides let me direct an eye of faith towards those who have endured these fiery trials aforetime. 'Twas certainly the gracious presense of the Son of God, and the rich cordials which he apply'd to these three martyrs that made their walk thro' a glowing furnace like a calm and cool summer-evening walk. For tho' they had no visible umbrellas to screen them from the scorching heat, they had that invisible one in Psa. cxxi. 5. "The Lord is thy shade." And tho' no external cordials were administer'd to them, the Son of God apply'd more effectual ones inwardly; even Divine promises to the heart by his spirit; such as that in Isaiah xliii. 2. When thou walkest thro' the fire (i. e. *thro' fiery trials*) thou shalt not be burnt, *in thy better part*; and when thou passest thro' the waters of *affliction* I will be with thee. So supporting and animating are such promises as these as to enable the afflicted Believer to say sometimes with the Apostle "I am filled with comfort; I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulations; for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us; so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." Tho' the gracious presence of a God in Christ is not so visible now as it was in this fiery furnace, 'tis no less real and animating. What glorious effects has it produced in some christian martyrs similar to those produced in these Hebrew youths! For were these perfectly easy amidst surrounding flames? equally easy have some dying martyrs been while fire has been consuming their bodies; and when the monster death has pierced their hearts with his sharp sting. Nay, joy at such times has burst from their lips in Anthems of praise; and they have solemnly declar'd that a bed of flames was to them like a bed of perfumes—And has the gracious presence of the Son of God been so animating and cheering, yea, in some instances so transporting to  
eminent

eminent christians while traveling thro' this vale of tears, yea when they have been in a prison, on a sick-bed, and in a bed of flames; what will this Divine presence be to them and me when we arrive at heaven, from which every annoyance is forever banish'd, and where all happiness is enjoy'd in consummate perfection; where the voice of the oppressor is never more heard; where the rage of tyrants is never again feared, and where no fire is felt except that of a graphic love!

N. B. A late memorable, well attested case is so applicable to the subject in hand as to deserve a place here—A woman that had for some time been under religious impressions, and a constant attendant on the means of grace, was charg'd by her husband to break off all prayer meetings, and from John Fletcher's parish-church. She told him that she could not in conscience do the latter. Hereupon her husband asked her one sabbath morning whether she would go to Church that day? I intend it said she. This so enrag'd him, that like Nebuchadnezzar he vow'd that if she did, he would heat his oven and throw her into it the moment she returned home. This he protested with horrid oaths. She however went; praying all the way that God would strengthen her to suffer whatever might befall her; but observe how strangely God provided a seasonable cordial for her drooping spirit. When Mr. F——r mounted the pulpit he had totally forgot the subject and sermon that he had prepared. To make up this defect he open'd to this III<sup>d</sup>. chap. of Daniel being the lesson for that day) In speaking upon the cruel usage and wonderful preservation of the Hebrew youths in the furnace, he did it in such a pointed and feeling way that every word came close to the woman's heart. In her return home she thought, if she had a thousand lives she could lay them all down for God; upon coming near her door, she saw the flames issuing out of the oven's mouth. But entering in, she found God as much at work in *her* house as He had that day been in *his own*. For to her astonishment she saw her husband on his knees, praying earnestly for pardon of sin. After this, he took her into his arms, and ask'd her pardon, and became a diligent seeker of God—See Mr. Fletcher's Life lately publish'd.

The first thing I did was to go to the  
 bank and get some money. I had  
 some money in the bank, but I  
 didn't want to take it out. I  
 was afraid to. I was afraid  
 that I would be caught. I was  
 afraid that I would be caught. I  
 was afraid that I would be caught.

[illegible]



## C H A P. IV.

*Nebuchadnezzar's Second Ominous Dream.—Its Interpretation—His tremendous Providential Fall; and gracious Restoration.*

**T**IS hard to determine, whether Nebuchadnezzar did more to ruin his soul, or God to save it. He was favoured with all the religious helps enjoy'd in the patriarchal age, such as Visions and monitory dreams. Twice had he a Vision of the Son of God; first typically in the IIId; afterwards openly in the IIIId. chap. He was also an eye witness to the miraculous preservation of three faithful servants of God in a furnace of fire. Providence too brought an eminent prophet into this King's dominions, yea into his palace and royal presence, who instructed, admonished, and warn'd him from time to time. But as these extraordinary means did not produce an effectual change in this haughty Monarch, the Lord plyed and followed him with still more powerful means recorded in this fourth chap. which merits our peculiar attention, because drawn up by the King himself in his own Chaldean language; and probably transcribed afterwards from his royal register by Daniel, and inserted into his book. In this said chap. Nebuchadnezzar gives a very affecting account, how by a most humiliating stroke of God's hand his haughty spirit was mortified, his carnal mind spiritualiz'd, and his wandering soul brought home to God. And tho' he might easily foresee that some circumstances in his narrative would expose him to censure and worldly shame, he was not ambitious to conceal the least tittle of it: but wished that all the world might be acquainted with every part of it. The Narrative begins thus.

No. II.

A

Nebuchadnezzar

Ver. 1 **N**EBUCHADNEZZAR the King unto all  
 People, Nations, and Languages that dwell  
 in all the earth ; peace be multiplied unto you. I  
 thought it good to shew the signs and wonders  
 2 that the high God hath wrought towards me, &c.

After this general introduction, He seems to make a solemn pause, and then introduceth the wonderful history of his singular conversion in this rapturous strain.—“ How great are his signs !  
 3 and how mighty are his wonders ! His kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and his dominion from generation to generation.”—As if he had said ; In all my former proclamations I repeatedly boasted, how many kingdoms I reign over ; deeming myself sole Lord and ruler over all. But now all my self-admiring thoughts are swallowed up in the universal dominion of the King of heaven ; before whose awful foot-stool I now prostrate myself, as one of his most unworthy subjects—After this fine pathetic exordium, the humble King gives a plain and artless account of God’s special dealings with his soul—“ I Nebuchadnezzar was at rest in my  
 4 palace. I saw a dream which made me afraid, and the thoughts upon my bed, and the visions of my head troubled me.”\* See here how strangely fear and trouble seiz’d this Monarch at a time and place the most unlikely, and least expected ; namely, while “ he was at rest in his house, flourishing in his palace, and sleeping in his bed.” But indeed our greatest troubles often invade us when least thought of. We should therefore be pre-arm’d and prepar’d  
 for

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\* Tho’ the generality of dreams are vague, vain, trifling and insignificant, as Solomon represents them in Eccl. v. 7. others, like this before us, are ominous, monitory, and important ; as is evident from Job iv. and chap. xxxiii. 15 ; also from those clear, deep, durable and extraordinary impressions which such dreams leave on the mind. And tho’ we have no Daniel to interpret them to us, they probably form a part of that wonderful plan of providence which will be unveil’d to us in a future world.

for them. But to return to the King's dream; in which some things were so plainly pointed towards himself, that he was anxious to get them interpreted. Consequently he applied, as usual, first 6 to his own Magicians and wise men. These failing him, as they had done once before, his next application was to Daniel, whom 7 he complimented as having the spirit of the holy God's in him; and 8 to whom he thus speaks—"I dreamed that I saw in the middle part 9 of the earth (*consequently near Babylon, supposed at that time to be the centre of the world*) a prodigious tree, whose towering top reached 10 unto the clouds, and whose side-branches over-spre'd the greater part of the earth. This tall, wide, spreading tree possessed two 14 choice properties; for 'twas a shelter to birds and beasts, both 12 against the scorching heat of summer, and the fierce storms of winter; and it afforded plenty of fruit for all land animals. Thus the former part of my dream was very encouraging; but how different was the latter, in which me thinks I saw a Watcher and an Holy One come down from heaven. His appearance was indeed 13 awful; but the sentence denounced by him was far more so; especially as I imagined it might concern myself in particular: for he cried aloud and said—"Hew down the tree; cut off its branches; shake off his leaves; scatter his fruit; let the beasts get away from 14 under it; and the fowls from his branches." However that severe sentence was attended with this mitigating circumstance; "Leave the stump of this tree in the earth; and let it be hooped round with a band of iron and brass."—But after all, tho' its condition 15 be safe, it must for a while be disgraceful and humiliating.—"Let it be wet with the dew of heaven; and let his portion be with grazing beasts; let his heart be changed from man's; and let a beast's heart be given him"—How long?—"till seven times pass 16 over him."—The dream being thus related, Daniel soon perceived it look'd with such a direct aspect towards the King's approaching downfall, that he stood amaz'd a whole hour, to think that his royal Master, whom he so much respected, and from whom he had received such multiplied favours, must fall from such a towering height of prosperity into such a deep abyss of adversity; and that himself must be the unwelcome messenger of evil tidings to him. 19



But rather than flatter and delude the King, and wrong his own conscience by prophesying smooth things, when he knew heaven had decreed the reverse, this faithful prophet resolved to declare the whole truth tho' he might thereby lose both the King's favour and his own life. However while he is constrained to deliver the alarming decree of providence, he will not offend if possible in the manner of doing it. Therefore, says he mildly, "My Lord I sincerely wish that the fulfillment of your dream may rather be the fate of your malignant enemies, than of yourself. But as the decree of heaven cannot be changed either by my wishes or prayers, I am constrained to inform you, that the tall and spreading tree in your dream refers to your mighty self, whose kingly "glory reacheth to the heavens; and whose vast empire (at least in the fame of it) extends to the remotest borders of the earth." And as that prodigious tree was laid level with the ground, so O King must you. Yea so great will be your fall, that you must for a while sink beneath the rank of a rational creature into the condition of a brute.—"They will drive thee from men, and thy dwelling must be with the beasts; and thou shalt <sup>eat</sup> ~~ate~~ grass till

25 then knowest (or art made humbly sensible) that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will." What a tremendous sentence was this! enough to drive the King to distraction, even before its execution took place. But was his case quite remediless? No, a remedy is prescrib'd, namely

27 repentance and reformation. And, says Daniel, "my counsel O King is that thou shouldest try this remedy, seeing it may be a lengthening of thy tranquility," tho' not of escaping the threaten'd

28 stroke altogether. And indeed it was not. For when about

29 twelve months after this, the King was boasting in that uncreature-

29 ly manner hereafter specified, we are told, "that a voice from hea-

30 ven denounced his doom, and he was driven from among men, and did <sup>eat</sup> ~~ate~~ grass as oxen; and his body, *by lying in the open fields dur-*

33 *ing the night season*, was wet with dews till his hair grew like eagles feathers"; not in kind or quality (*for to suppose that would be ridiculous;*) but only in its over-spreading his whole face, as feathers do

do the eagle's—'Tis added, that "his nails grew like birds' claws"<sup>\*</sup> Here infidelity boldly exclaims—How incredible is it that a man, that a King should be actually transform'd into a grazing brute ! that he should continue in that condition seven years, even till his hair resembled eagle's feathers ; and his nails birds' claws. 'Tis answer'd ; large allowances must be made for that high and strong manner in which eastern Writers express things beyond what we in these cooler climates do. Hence Expositors should rather mitigate than heighten and enhance such expressions as these, if they would not needlessly strengthen infidelity. But how many have done the contrary ? yea, have not our translators of the Bible done so too, when they inserted (*feathers* and *claws*) into our English version ; neither of which is in the Hebrew original ; therefore they are printed in small Italic letters in our English Bibles—But replies infidelity ; admitting this ; the rest of the story appears incredible, because we never read of a similar judgment inflicted on any person besides Nebuchadnezzar. But let me ask ; Do we ever read of any other person running equal lengths in idolatry, persecution, blasphemy, and pride, that he did ? Why then might not a proportionably greater judgment befall him than any other person ? Besides, the judgment inflicted on this Babylonian was not really so great as some have represented it. His body was not transform'd into a real brute ; only a brutal frenzy seiz'd his mind. Therefore when he was restor'd, according to the account given in the latter part of this chap. nothing is said to have been restor'd to him except the use of his *reason*. As to the change made on Nebuchadnezzar's body by his hair and nails growing exceeding long, this is often the case when a disorder'd mind cannot take care of the body ; and with regard to the King's expulsion from human society and social life, that's the natural consequence when a frenzy of the mind runs high. Add further, that every distracted person, as well as this unhappy Monarch, may in a qualified sense be said to have the heart of a beast, seeing he has no more sense than a brute—“ But  
Nebuchadnezzar's

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\* Of so quick a growth are nails, that we are said to change them and get new ones every two months.

Nebuchadnezzar ate grass like an ox"—True; and have not many frenzical people done as senseless things as chewing tufts of grass or straws. But is it not expressly affirm'd in the 21st v. of the next chap. that *they fed him with grass like oxen*? 'Tis answer'd, the original word translated (*fed*) doth almost always signify (*savour'd* or *tasted*): and Montanus the latin translator of the Hebrew Bible, supposeth that the plural in this verse is substituted for the singular number; therefore he translates it (*sapuit gramen*) i. e. Nebuchadnezzar tasted grass. So that the judgment inflicted on this Monarch was not so great as some have represented it; therefore not too big to be credited: neither did it, as many Expositors imagine,\* continue so long as seven years; notwithstanding its being repeatedly asserted that it must lye on till seven  
23 times had passed over the King. But why must those seven times be measur'd by years rather than by days, seeing 'tis not said, at the  
34 end of the years, but at the end of the days Nebuchadnezzar's understanding return'd to him." Besides, is it credible that so large an empire as Chaldea, would continue seven years without a King, and wait all that time for the recovery of one who appear'd to be sunk into the senseless condition of a brute? However this must have been the case if Nebuchadnezzar's frenzy lasted seven years; for we are told "that at the end of the days Nebuchadnezzar was restor'd not only to his understanding, but to his kingdom in all its glory by the unanimous consent of his nobles."—Now all these  
36 abasing and exalting providences the humble and thankful King thus faithfully publisheth to the world. "At the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes to heaven," &c. As if he had said, At the end of the days in which I had been distracted and brutified, I Nebuchadnezzar no longer fasten'd mine eyes on the ground like groveling brutes, but began to look upward as a man, as a penitent, as a convert, and an humble petitioner for mercy"—It seems, God at first darted a few dim rays of Divine knowledge into his mind. This glimmering ray of knowledge induc'd

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\* Mr. Poole, Mr. Henry, and Dr. Louth.



duc'd the humble Monarch to lift up his thankful heart and adoring eyes to heaven for the use of his understanding. "A while after, says he, my reason was restor'd: consequently, the heart of 35 a beast was taken away and the heart of a man given; yea, which was still better, the heart of stone was taken away too, and a tender heart bestow'd. Ezek. xxxvi. 26. After this my forfeited Kingdom was restor'd"—It seems during the whole of his phrensical brutal state, his loyal subjects never swerv'd from their allegiance; but kept the throne vacant, waiting its Lord's return. Now observe what gratitude the restored King express'd for these multiply'd 34 favours—"I blessed the most high, and praised and honour'd Him whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom from generation to generation." O what exalted what enlarged conceptions had this heathen Monarch of God, after he was divinely enlighten'd; and what an humble sense of himself and of all creatures in general! "All the inhabitants of the earth, said he, are 35 reputed as nothing." They are nothing with respect to their original; for they sprang from nothing: and nothing with regard to present existence, because without a *Divine supporter* they would immediately drop into nothing—After these things we find this self-abasing Monarch celebrating Jehovah's absolute sovereignty, saying, in the same verse, "The Lord doth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." So He does, The Angels of heaven are his armies; the inhabitants of earth his tenants; both are employed by Him; both are accountable to Him. The highest Angel is not above his controul, nor the meanest insect beneath his paternal regards. 'Tis next added—"None can stay his hand, nor say unto Him, What doest thou"? i. e. Jehovah acts with uncontrollable power, and is not accountable to any of his creatures for the manner in which He acts. Only 37 He invariably adheres to one rule in debasing the proud. Of this, intimates the humble King, I myself was lately a dreadful monument.

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

1. What an instructive symbol doth the tree in Nebuchadnezzar's dream give us of a great and good King. Its high towering

top and spreading branches were a striking emblem of kingly greatness and dominion; but its chief excellency consisted in bearing much fruit, and affording a defence and refreshment to all who took shelter under it. v. 12. As Mr. Henry remarks, King's and Magistrates should not value themselves so much upon being great and grand, as on becoming public protectors and benefactors. Such should not live chiefly for themselves, but for the good of the community. King's must neither resemble the wild bramble, the pricking thorn or briar; but a fruit tree bearing large clusters, not so much for its own use, as for the benefit of others.

2. The cutting down of this great tree exhibits an affecting emblem of all worldly greatness and grandeur brought down and laid low, like the most stately trees laid prostrate on the ground by the felling ax. Let then the greatest Peers of the land, yea, let the grandest Monarch's on earth know for their humiliation what their certain fate must be e'er long. Tho' like this Babylonish Monarch their excellency mount up to the heavens; yea, tho' like the King of Edom, they could make their nest among the stars (Obed. iv.) in a while they must share the levelling fate of every thing beneath the sun. Neither the forest or flower garden; neither the changing moon or fluctuating sea are more subject to changes than the conditions of mankind. How soon was the grandest and most potent Monarch in the east laid on a level with beasts of the field, and made a fellow commoner with grazing herds! And is this Nebuchadnezzar the Great? saith Mr. Henry. Is this He who looked so glorious on the throne, so formidable in the camp; and had sufficient skill to govern kingdom's; but now not so much sense as a child four years old. What a striking picture have we here, and indeed in the history of all ages and nations concerning the instability of human greatness and glory! Let not therefore the wise man glory in his wisdom, nor the mighty man in his might, but let him that glorieth, glory only in the Lord" Jer. ix. 24.

3. From v. 13, and 14, we learn that good Angels, those dear lovers of mankind, are not only messengers of mercy, but of judgment to a guilty world. "Behold a watcher and an holy one

one came down from heaven, who cried aloud and said—"Hew down the tree"—Fifty are Angels called *Watchers*, because when they pass to and fro thro' the world, they narrowly watch the behaviour of mortals, to the intent they may be swift witnesses for or against them in the day of judgment. One of these celestial Courtiers had been an eye witness to the pride of this Babylonian Monarch; therefore He brings this message of vengeance from the upper world. "Hew down this great tree"—If mankind had not been a race of apostates, benevolent Angels would always have brought them messages of grace and peace; but having rebell'd against heaven, they lye open to danger both from above and below; having as much cause to dread the vengeance of heaven as the torments of hell.

4. What an heinous sin is pride: 'tis hateful to God, being "one of those seven abominations which He peculiarly abhors" Pro. vi. and 'tis equally hurtful to man; for scripture saith "Pride goes before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." This Nebuchadnezzar painfully experienced; How low had he been degraded and debased for this sin! Because he had imagin'd himself to be more than a man, God justly made him less than one, by laying him on a level with the beasts that perish. Be it therefore our prime endeavour to cultivate lowliness of mind: if we do not, a jealous God will sooner or later lay us infinitely lower than Nebuchadnezzar had been, even to the infernal pit. So far should we be from priding ourselves in such childish things as fine clothes, fine shapes, or a fair skin; that we must not be filled with self conceit on account of the nobler endowments of the mind; or even of our christian experiences, spiritual gifts, religious attainments, or personal righteousness. For as the Apo. asks—"What hast thou that thou hast not receiv'd; and if thou hast receiv'd (i. e. only borrowed it) why dost thou boast." How unseemly is such self exalting language as this? 'Twas I who did this or the other great exploit in religion, and for the cause of Christ. This is imitating the boasting King of Babylon who said v. 30, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built by the might of my power and for the honour of my majesty." Observe how amazingly pride magnifies its own little exploits; and how commonly boasting is attend-



ed with lying. Babylon, which at this time was many miles in circumference within the city walls, was too big to be the work of one man only, and too ancient to be done in Nebuchadnezzar's day. From Gen. x. 10. (especially the margin) many infer that Nimrod, Noah's great grandson, was the first founder of this illustrious city; tho' Nebuchadnezzar afterwards enlarg'd and beautified it.

5. When we reflect how many blessings Nebuchadnezzar lost in that one loss, viz. his reason; how thankful should we be for that noble gift of heaven! In the want of this, our condition is render'd more deplorable than that of brutes; more senseless, more troublesome both to ourselves and others. Scarce any faculty of the mind, scarce any member of the body have their proper use when reason is wanting to guide and govern them. Let us therefore pity rather than despise and deride those who have lost this precious jewel. Let us consider how soon, how easily the wisest of us may be deprived of it, by a stroke on the head, or by a collection of humours within it—by an high fever—by a slight turn in the corporeal or animal frame—or by a fit of deep melancholy. But far more deplorable are the *frenzys* or deliriums which proceed from sin than from natural or accidental causes. When sinners drown reason by hard drinking or by extreme worldly carkings, or by excessive love to some creature-object, or by fears lest the world fail them, or by some black or bloody crime, which plungeth them into the utmost horror and distraction, what a tremendous case is this! How cautiously should we avoid sin and all occasions leading towards it! In a word, the utmost care should be taken that this glorious sun which the Creator hath lighted up within us, may always move and shine in its own proper orbit; neither basely sinking into sensuality, nor arrogantly climbing into the throne of God, there to pronounce peremptory sentences upon all the mysteries of creation, providence, or redemption.

6. What an awful thre'tning was this—"Hew down the tree"—even tho' its spiral top reach the heavens, and its branches spread to the ends of the earth (v. 14); but what a gracious softening clause is subjoin'd in this next verse—"Nevertheless, leave the stump of his roots in the earth; let a band of iron and brags sur-

round it"—How constantly is this decree of heaven verify'd in those who are rooted in grace. While Christians have their standing in this world they lye open to so many strong winds of temptation and desolating storms, that the leaves of their profession may for a while be stripp'd off; but the root still continues: and why? because God fulfils this promise—"Leave the stump of the roots in the earth and let a band (*of covenant love*) surround it." How reviving is that promise in Prov. xii, 3, "The root of the righteous shall not be moved."

7. In the mental distraction which seiz'd Nebuchadnezzar all profligate vicious sinners may see their own picture, and should be humbled by it. For in how many particulars do their features resemble each other. For instance, Did Nebuchadnezzar in his frantic fits ramble into the fields, and herd with grazing beasts? and do not vicious sinners associate with an herd of two legg'd animals whose society is far more disgraceful, more infectious, more dangerous, and more pernicious, than mingling with brute animals arm'd with hoofs and horns. Is not he who strikes with the fist of wickedness more dangerous than the pushing horn? Is not the railer and slanderer, who are said in scripture to have the poison of asps under their lips, more to be shunn'd than those venomous creatures which never sting till provok'd? And what if Nebuchadnezzar was so brutified that he sometimes chewed tufts of grass; was not this more harmless than the habitual practice of those who are said to drink in iniquity as the thirsty beast doth water? Job xv.

8. How awful was the judgment denounced against the King of Babylon when "his heart was chang'd from that of a man into that of a beast." Yet how many sinners do by a worse act of *sele de se* bring the like judgment on themselves. They certainly do this who make both reason and conscience slaves to their brutal appetites and passions. The same may be said of that groveling herd whose thoughts, desires, and pursuits, are limited to the present short span of life; creatures who exercise no care about their precious souls; and have no more relish for religious matters than a brute has for logick, or for the fine colours and smell of a flower garden. But what a sordid sorry life is this! How much to be lamented! How

much to be dreaded and shun'd ! As the judicious Mr. Howe said “ Words cannot fully describe the madness of those, who that they may live the life of brutes in this world, stick not to share the lot of devils in the next—And that notable saying of Father Lactantius deserves our regards namely, “ If a man would choose death rather than to have the face and shape of a beast; how much more miserable is it to carry the heart of a beast under the shape of a man”—Being unwilling to close this chap. with such a dark scene as affords not the smallest ray of light and hope to a penitent sinner, I would observe, that the conversion of such a monster of wickedness as Nebuchadnezzar was, should teach us never to give up the most abandon'd wretch as incurable, seeing we here find one who seem'd to have damnation written upon his forehead snatch'd like a brand out of the fire, and made an heir of eternal life.

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## C H A P. V.

*An impious midnight-revel in the Court of Babylon awfully rebuk'd by the visible hand of God; writing the speedy doom of King Belshazzar and his Kingdom, which was executed the same night in the tragical slaughter of the King and his Citizens; and in the final subversion of the Babylonian Empire.*

THE fourth chap. concluding the life and reign of Nebuchadnezzar, his Son Evilmerodach reign'd in his stead 2 Kings xxv. But as Daniel had no dealings with this King that deserv'd to be publicly recorded, his reign is pass'd over in this book; Accordingly this 5th chap. begins with the reign of Belshazzar; who tho' He was but Nebuchadnezzar's grandson, He is repeatedly call'd his Son in this chap. according to the way of speaking in ancient times. During Belshazzar's reign, Cyrus King of Persia march'd a great army into his kingdom, where he routed his forces in a pitch'd battle; and then laid siege to Babylon, whither the routed



routed army had fled for shelter. That City being stored with provision for twenty years ; and surrounded by an exceeding high and thick wall, besides its being almost incircled by that famous river Euphrates, which had run thro' the garden of Eden, it held out almost a two year's siege, according to Dean Priedeaux's account. What ominous events occur'd on the last night of that long siege we are informed in the present chap. where the remarkable scene opens in the King's palace. There we find him with his Wives, Ver. 1 concubines, and a thousand Lord's at a magnificent feast, serv'd up in silver and gold plate ; it being no small piece of state policy with some Sovereign's to oblige their Grandees with Balls and banquets. When the feast was over, He and they betook themselves to drinking and carousing, notwithstanding the enemy's army was at their city gates. Belshazzar's head being over-heated with liquor, he in a drunken frolick gave orders that those consecrated vessels, which had been taken from the temple at Jerusalem, and afterwards placed in an idol-temple at Babylon, should be now brought forth for Him and his Grandees, and even his concubines or strumpets to quaff out off. From drinking they proceeded to singing, 3 They roared out songs to the honour of their idols ; not only of those which were made of silver, gold or brass, but of wood and 4 stone. And while they extoll'd their own wooden and stone-idols, they perhaps degraded and insulted the God of Israel and his sacred temple ; the vessels of which as well as the worshipers they had now led into mournful captivity. But, as scripture speaks, —“ the triumphing of the wicked is short.”—’Twas so now ; for while Belshazzar and his pot-companions were in the midst of their revels, the cups going merrily round ; drinking confusion perhaps to Cyrus and his army (as Mr. Henry conjectures) ; and roaring out huzzas in confidence that the hostile troops would soon retire and go quite away ; then even then was destruction at the door, ready to break in within a few hours. But because future danger (tho' near) is little regarded by stupid fots amidst their bacchanalian revels ; therefore God Himself gave them a rousing awful signal. What was it—Not a clap of thunder nor a flash of light'ning. But what was more pointed and heart piercing, namely, the fingers of a man's hand on the wall, having a pen in it which wrote the doom both

Ver. both of the King and his kingdom in mysterious characters which might be clearly seen even in the night, because near the place  
 5 where the great candlestick was lighted up; besides 'tis said, the King actually saw the hand writing\* He saw the hand which wrote, but not the person whose hand it was; this made the thing more  
 6 terrifying. Consequently, see what a panick seiz'd him. "His countenance was chang'd," i. e. turn'd pale like an eclipse on the sun; "his loins shook; his joints were loosen'd, and his knees smote against each other." And to whom did the affrighted King apply for relief? Did He go to the God of heaven by prayer? No, but like his grandsire He consulted his Chaldean Astrologers, who must interpret to Him this mysterious hand writing; and as a motive to display their utmost skill, He promis'd that whoever would give Him a satisfactory account of this mysterious writing should be dignified with the highest honours of the Court, and become the  
 7 third Ruler in his Kingdom. But they honestly confess'd that the  
 8 task was too great for them. This increased the consternation of  
 9 the King and his court; for they imagin'd a writing so very mysterious, must be exceeding ominous and *boding*. Well, tidings of all this soon reach'd the Queen-mother. This great Lady, being highly celebrated in ancient history for her singular wisdom and virtue, she might have no inclination to attend the King's revel: however, upon hearing what had lately occur'd, She came to comfort and counsel her Son on the present perplexing occasion. First She  
 10 genzely complimented Him with an "O King live for ever." Then She advis'd Him to send for Daniel to interpret the mysterious Writing. As an inducement so to do, She assured Him that  
 11 this Daniel was such an intelligent person that he appear'd to be inspir'd

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\* *Visions were one of those ways by which God, as scripture informs us, frequently taught the Ancients in order to supply the defects of a written Revelation in Old Testament times. And let none discredit the vision here mentioned, and denounce it a fiction merely on account of its being a preternatural phenomenon. For on similar grounds they might disbelieve a thousand extr'ordinary phenomena which are often seen in the air; also the many well attested apparitions which prognosticate death; as that did which Belshazzar now saw.*

inspir'd with a more than human wisdom : Yea, not only had He a *Ver.*  
 most clear enlighten'd head, but an excellent heart to turn his know-  
 ledge to the best use. " An excellent spirit is in him, said the  
 Queen Mother, even the Spirit of the holy Gods" Besides, adds  
 She thy royal Father often employ'd Him in interpreting dreams  
 and solving difficulties ; and had found Him more expert in that  
 art than all his Chaldean Astrologers—In consequence of this am-  
 ple recommendation, the young King sent for Daniel. But like  
 the generality of eastern Monarchs, and two many King's in other  
 countries, he had so cloister'd, himself within his palace  
 walls, that he knew not some of his most valuable ne'bouring sub-  
 jects ; nor this great and good man in particular ; therefore he  
 ask'd him " whether he was that Daniel who had signaliz'd himself *13*  
 so much in his Father's\* reign, and had been advanced according-  
 ly"? Belshazzar finding him to be the very same person, shewed  
 him the mysterious writing, and offer'd him a large reward to ex-  
 plain it. I will most freely explain it without any reward, said Da- *14 &c.*  
 niel. I must also faithfully inform you what you have done to oc-  
 casion this menacing hand writing to appear against you. Know  
 then that tho' God had rais'd your Father to the highest pitch of  
 kingly power and grandeur that any Monarch on earth ever arriv'd  
 at; yet for his idolatry and profan'ness he justly degraded him to the  
 low condition of a brute ; but that upon his earnest supplications  
 and repentance he afterwards restored him both to his reason and  
 his throne. But thou O Belshazzar, art so far from being reclaim'd  
 by this fearful example in your family ; that at this very time when  
 your city is beleagu'r'd by an hostile army, and in hourly danger of  
 being broken into, you have been feasting and revelling, as if you fear-  
 ed neither God nor man ; yea you have profan'd the consecrated  
 vessels of Jehovah's temple by turning them into common quaffing  
 cups for your harlots to drink out of at this midnight revel : nay by  
 your

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\* *Tho' Nebuchadnezzar is call'd Belshazzar's Father four times in this chap ; he was but his Grand-father, for, the ancient Hebrews call'd both Fathers and Grand-fathers by this one common name, Father. Hence the term Grand-father is not to be found in the Old Testament.*



Ver. your idolatrous drunken songs, you have blasphemed the Almighty to his face: In a word "the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, thou hast not glorified"—What a noble pattern have we here both of fortitude and faithfulness! This prophet we see, knew not how to fawn and flatter the greatest Monarch on earth; nor to prophesy smooth things to Him against whom the most tremendous sentence was denounc'd; a sentence that God's own hand had written in mysterious characters on the  
 24 plaister of his palace-wall; which, saith Daniel, I shall now read, and interpret; **MENE MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN. ME-**  
 25 **NE**, denotes any thing that's number'd and finished: accordingly  
 26 in this place it denotes that the days both of your life and reign  
 27 are almost at an end. **TEKEL** is here interpreted by this inspired Seer as something that's deficient in weight—"Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting"—But did not an Omniscient God know this royal sinner to be wanting before He had thus tried him? undoubtedly He did; but to convince him how equitably He acted towards him, He assured Him that He did not reject him as reprobate silver, till He had fairly weighed him. Observe; before God takes up his rod to smite the impenitent, He takes up his scales to weigh them. But to proceed to the next mystic word in this Hand writing—**UPHARSIN**. From this word **PERES** is derived, which signifies a fragment, or some thing broken to  
 28 pieces; therefore in this verse says Daniel it denotes that the Kingdom of Babylon was now breaking into pieces; and that the Medes and Persians would divide it between them—Now observe with what exemplary meekness Belshazzar both heard and bare these unwelcome tidings. So far was He from being fier'd with rage and revenge against the messenger who deliver'd them, that He was both just and generous in ordering out for him the promis'd reward; for He wisely consider'd that not the prophets ill-will, but his own ill-conduct had occasion'd those bad tidings—To proceed, the next verse in this chap. saith that "Daniel was now clothed in scarlet, with a chain of gold around his neck; and they proclaimed Him  
 30 third Ruler in the Kingdom." After this the chap. closeth with the sorrowful story, that the Persian army forc'd their way into Ba-

bylon on the same night that the ominous hand-writing appear'd on the wall.\* The consequence was, Belshazzar was slain in the general carnage; and Cyrus the Conqueror consign'd over the Kingdom to his uncle Darius. 31

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

1. How audacious and dangerous is it to profane sacred things by prostituting them to sordid uses! This was Belshazzar's crime, who turn'd the consecrated vessels of the temple into drinking bowls and quaffing cups at a night-revel. And how soon and severely did Divine vengeance scourge this act of profaneness, even the same night on which it was committed. Yea it discovers a contempt of religion in general for people to act rudely even towards pagan temples, and the worship conducted in them: For as those temples and worship, tho' erroneous, imply some sense of religion, and a regard to some Deity, history informs us, that divine vengeance hath often overtaken the profaners thereof. In the mean time, if inbeimpious to profane places of worship, and their sacred furniture, tho' made by mere human hands: what must it be to profane and Jamppoon the sacred Scriptures: exposing them to contempt by straining phrases and setting 'em in an awkward light: whereby the holy Bible is turn'd into a jest book. Here I might also take in others who seldom talk of God's Word except over their cups, when their heads are inflamed with liquor. How nearly do such equal the impiety of Belshazzar who converted the vessels of the temple into drinking bowls.

2. By comparing the first and last part of this chap. together we learn that security and sensuality are sad presages of approaching ruin. What amazing security and negligence seiz'd the King of Babylon! his Courtiers also, and Princes of the realm, who durst  
C abandon

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\* History affirms, Babylon was so vastly large, and its inhabitants so intoxicated this night, that when the Persian army enter'd one end of that city, the report did not reach the other end till three days after.

abandon themselves to carousing and singing impious songs, with other mad rant, at the very time that a *victorious* hostile army croud-ed their city-gates, just ready to break in! Yet thus it is with thoughtless creatures who pursue their sports and recreations when "the Supreme Judge standeth at the door" Jas. v. 9. What a thin and feeble partition wall of flesh stands between them and death; them and eternal Judgment, yea between them and the bottomless pit. How nearly do such resemble stupid mariners who drink, dance and *balloo* just before some grievous tempest sweeps them overboard. It has been often found that sinners are least safe when most secure; and that a danger made light of comes the sooner. As an extraordinary stillness in the air often precedes and presages a whirlwind or tornado; so an unusual lightness and cheerfulness is often the immediate forerunner of a deadly disease. On these accounts we must never be off our watch and guard, because we know not how soon death may seize and hurry us away forever.

3. How short an interval often is there between extravagant mirth and revelling on one hand, and horror and anguish of mind on the other. In the same hour wherein the King of Babylon and his Courtiers were carousing and roaring out their profane songs, an incident suddenly happen'd which unexpectedly chang'd an house of sensual mirth into an house of mourning, causing paleness to sit brooding on each countenance; and fear and trembling to seize the *Master of the revels*; For we are told, the King's countenance was chang'd, his mind distress'd; yea that a tremor seiz'd each limb. How fitly, saith Mr. Henry, might Belshazzar on this occasion apply to himself that prophecy which probably referr'd chiefly to him in Isa. xxi. "I was dismay'd at the sight of it: pangs took hold of me as of a woman in travel" my heart panted: fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath He turn'd into fear unto me"—The mirth of the wicked (saith Solomon who well knew such things) is like the crackling of thorns under a pot, which make a sudden blaze, and then expire in smoke and darkness. Who then would choose to be profanely merry a single hour, and miserable for ever.

4. If the mere shadow of the Almighty's fingers on the wall  
threw



threw Belshazzar and the Princes of his realm into such a mighty consternation, what will his omnipotent sin avenging ARM do to those who must feel the whole weight of it in the regions of DAMNATION? But alas how commonly are weak and silly mortals affrighted with bug-bear shadows which present themselves to the eyes of the body, while they stand unappal'd and undismay'd at the greatest real dangers, chiefly because they lye out of sight. Again, if a few unintelligible characters written upon the wall by the finger of God did so deeply affect this Monarch; what a pity is it that those more legible characters which his finger has so fairly inscrib'd upon his handy works of creation are view'd with so little attention and admiration! that God's hand is so little seen in them; and people's hearts so little affected by them. But the finger of God not only appears in his handy works, but in his sacred word, which exhibits characters far more legible than what appear'd on this gloomy night upon Belshazzar's palace wall. 'Tis expressly said that the ten commandments were written by the finger of God. Ex. xxxi. 18. yet what a comparative few are affected by them! Altho' in this Divine law God has written the fearful doom of the impenitent and unbelieving clearly as with a sun beam, and has particulariz'd the persons to whom that final doom belongs; how few apply it to themselves, as Belshazzar did this hand-writing! search Reader whether this is not your infatuated case.

5. How awful is it for any to fall under Belshazzar's sentence "Tekel, thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting;" seeing a want of gospel-weight here will end in perdition hereafter—On the other hand; what a safe and blessed condition are they in, for whom this condemnatory hand-writing is cancell'd and abolished; and to whom those heart-reviving words belong, (which manifestly allude to this hand-writing pointed against Belshazzar Coll. III. 13, 14. "You hath He quicken'd together with Him; having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the hand-writing that was against us and contrary to us; and took it out of the way, nailing to his cross." Be it known; "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" *either from law or gospel*, from heaven or earth Rom. viii. 1. For Christ hath redeemed them from the curse of the law; being made a curse for them Gall. III.

## C H A P. VI.

Ver. **T**HE Book of Daniel is crowded with a diversity of scenes, not only in History and Prophecy, but Martyrology. The third chap. held up to our view three Jewish captives, who chose to be cast into a fiery furnace, rather than bow down their souls to the vile sin of idolatry. This ensuing Sixth chap. shews how a fourth captive Jew was for a similar cause doom'd to a den of lions. To both of these cases the Apostle undoubtedly refers in Heb. xi. 33, 34. where speaking of the shocking trials endured by Old Testament worthies, and their noble triumphs over them, he tells us, "some of them quenched the violence of fire; others stopped the mouths of lions." The better to understand this latter case be it known, that on that memorable night in which a foreign hostile army brake into the city Babylon and found Belshazzar with his princes at a night revel, or at least snoring out the intoxicating fumes of that revel (see the concluding verses of the former chap.) Belshazzar was slain; and King Darius, who had now conquer'd that Kingdom by the agency of his Nephew Cyrus, seiz'd the throne of Babylon and Chaldea. Now, as that large Kingdom was divided into 120 Provinces, King Darius set an equal number of deputy Rulers over them. To the intent these 120 Princes might neither wrong their Sovereign, nor his subjects, the King very prudently set three Presidents over them to inspect their conduct, and to convey intelligence concerning it. In choosing these the King neither enquir'd whether they were poor or rich; of this or that religious sect or party; but whether they were completely qualified for the important office assigned them: therefore He chose Daniel, tho' a Jew, a foreigner, and once a poor captive, to be his chief President; because as the historian remarks, "He found him to

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*Had the sacred Historian regarded the order of time more than the order of matter, the two next chap's. which treat of what was done in the first and third years of Belshazzar's reign, must have been plac'd before this chap. which relates what was done by his successor Darius: But a sameness of matter which concludes the fifth and begins the sixth, justifies the present arrangement.*

to be a man of a most excellent spirit"—No sooner was Daniel ad-  
 vanced to this dignified office, but envy, that constant attendant  
 on worldly honour and prosperity, shot all her envenomed darts at  
 him, in order to smite and fetch him down from his high towering  
 station. "Both Princes and Presidents as the next verse speaks  
 sought matter of accusation against him; but in vain: for they  
 could find no real fault or flaw in his management of government  
 affairs" And such a regard had these pagans to natural justice,  
 that they would not, like so many in christian countries, entice or  
 hire witnesses to charge him with crimes he was not guilty of. To  
 proceed; as Daniel's adversaries could take no advantage against  
 him by any law yet in force, they contrive a new law, whereby to  
 entrap his conscience. It being observed that Daniel pray'd con-  
 stantly to God thrice a day his supplanters solicited Darius to es-  
 tablish a decree "that none of his subjects should for the space of thirty  
 days petition a favour of God or man, except the King, upon  
 the penalty of being cast into a den of lions." What an heaven-  
 daring decree was this! But what will not malice impell some peo-  
 ple unto? To procure the downfall of the man whose greatness  
 they envied, these deputy rulers would banish all religion out of the  
 Kingdom, and in a sort dethrone God himself. Well, who could  
 expect that the King would give sanction to such an impious extra-  
 vagant law as this! But, what will not a desire of fame and the itch  
 of flattery prompt a man unto? especially an idolatrous heathen in  
 an unguarded hour, and under a sudden hasty temptation! Besides,  
 to induce the King to comply with this decree, they assure him, that  
 it had the consent and approbation of all the Princes, Presidents,  
 and privy Counsellors in the Kingdom. This to be sure was a lye;  
 seeing their proposing such a decree was on a supposition that Presi-  
 dent Daniel wou'd not consent to it. However as their representa-  
 tions tended to flatter the King's vanity, and greatly to encrease  
 the dependence of his subjects upon Him, He wholly relied upon  
 his flattering courtiers, and rashly seal'd and sign'd the impious de-  
 cree. By the way, how pitious is the condition of King's, who  
 being so often necessitated to see with other peoples eyes, and to  
 hear with other peoples ears, are (like credulous Darius) in many  
 important cases wretchedly impos'd on. But to proceed; In or-  
 der



der to escape the penalty of a law so directly levell'd against him, we do not find that Daniel stepped in the least aside from the usual path of duty ; a following verse saith, " When Daniel knew that the writing was sign'd he went into his house, and his windows being open in his chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done afore-time." This procedure of Daniel soon reached the ears of his enemies, who went with all speed to the King, and lodged a very heavy charge against the newly detected culprit ; for they informed his Majesty that this *vagabond* Jew had acted directly contrary to the King's royal mandate ; not thro' ignorance and weakness, or from a principle of conscience, (which would have been excusable) but from a spirit of obstinacy and disregard both to Him and his laws. Now, observe how strangely these heavy accusations, by which Daniel's foes attempted to exasperate the King's spirit against him, did by an over-ruling Divine hand work a contrary way. For, his Majesty now suspecting that envy and malice rather than any real love to Him or concern for his honour, did actuate Daniel's accusers, 'tis said in the next verse, that when the King heard *their words*, *their bitter words*, He was sorely displeased with Himself, "*namely for being influenced by such ensnaring ill designing men*, and that He set his heart upon Daniel to deliver him ; yea, that he laboured till the going down of the sun in contriving some honourable way of delivering him." But his treacherous courtiers told Him plainly ; it could not be done ; because according to the laws of Medes and Persians, (which they were now under) every royal decree was unalterable. The King, now finding *no other way for it*, reluctantly consign'd over his favourite prime Minister to the den of lions ; and not only so but consented that the stone which was to cover the den's mouth, for the better security of the death-devoted prey, should be sealed with his own royal signet. And now the sorrowful King bids Daniel a solemn farewell. At parting he uttered this remarkable and cheering prediction " O Daniel, thy God, whom thou serveest continually will deliver thee"—But ah ! we shall soon find that this act of faith did not free the sorrowful King from all anxious doubts and fears concerning his faithful and beloved servant ; for a following

verse

verse informs us, " that He went to his palace and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music, *according to the custom of* 18 *eastern Monarchs*, brought before Him; and his sleep went from Him"—It seems, King Darius by sympathy suffer'd more for Daniel that night in which he took up his lodging in a den of lions, than Daniel himself did. A most amiable disposition this; and most worthy to be imitated! To persons in danger and distress sympathy and compassion is a duty incumbent on all, but peculiarly binding on Christians, who are united to one another not only by the common ties of humanity, but by the sacred bands of grace too—But to proceed; after a tossing sleepless night the King arose 19 early in the morning, and went in haste to the lion's den, with some glimmering hopes that what himself had wickedly done, God had perhaps graciously undone: therefore with a plaintive voice, and an heart ready to burst with grief He cried out " O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions" Well, tho' the King spake 20 with a lamentable tone, Daniel knew his voice, and answer'd Him with all the affectionate respects due from a subject to his Sovereign: So far was he from upbraiding Him for his sinful softness, in yielding to the malice of his persecutors, that with a cheerful spirit, and with the voice of loyalty he wished eternal life might be the happy lot of that King who had so lately and so rashly seal'd his death-warrant. O King live for ever said Daniel: my God 21 hath sent his Angel, and hath shut the lions mouths, that they have not hurt me. It seems the brutes in the den, as one said, were more hospitable to him than those in the palace and court. The 22 King, hearing these good tidings from Daniel's own lips, was transported with joy; and gave orders to have him fetch'd out of the den immediately. There they found him safe and sound. It 23 seems when Daniel's persecutors had put off humanity, these shaggy monsters in some sort put it on; and thereby verified that prediction concerning gospel times, Isa. xi. " The lion shall lye down with the lamb." But after all, what can we think of a man living and lying unhurt in a den of fierce lions?—The thing is indeed strange, but not incredible; because many Christians in later ages have been almost equally favour'd; who have felt no more pain amidst the agonies

agonies of death, nor even in martyrdom flames than Daniel did in this den of lions. To proceed: Daniel being thus remarkably deliver'd, King Darius levelled the same vengeance against his persecutors, which they had so unjustly levelled against him; they were therefore thrown into the same den of lions, who receiving them with open mouths, quickly devoured them. Thus these savage brutes became instruments of Divine vengeance upon these wicked men, who justly fell into the same pit which they had digged for another Pl. vii. 15. This transaction being ended the chap. concludes with signal favours conferred on Daniel during the reigns of King Darius and his nephew successor; also the high honour done to Daniel's God: for we are informed that Darius issued forth a proclamation, in which He publish'd to all the world Jehovah's eternal kingdom and universal dominion over all things, together with the wonders wrought by Him both in heaven and earth, more especially on this servant Daniel. In consequence of this He chargeth all his subjects thro' his vast empire to revere and stand in awe of Daniel's God—This advancement of Daniel was not so short liv'd as the first, for we are told he kept his elevated station during the reigns of King Darius and Cyrus.

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

1. What a striking picture of envy doth this chap. set forth! The objects which envy casts a jealous eye towards, also repines at, and torments itself with, are persons in honour, health and prosperity. When creatures around smile, envy weeps; and when these mourn and lour, this ill natur'd diabolic vice grimly smiles. What a mortifying consideration is it that Daniel should raise himself enemies not by his badness, but by his goodness and uprightness; and that he should provoke by all the methods he took to oblige. But alas Solomon's remark is too often verified, "that for every right work a man is envied by his neighbour Eccl. iv. 4. Blessed be God, said one, that there is a state and place where obedience

\* How strongly is this express'd in a single line by Ovid

"*Et fundis lachrymas quia nil lachrymabile cernis.*"



obedience will sit more easy both upon ourselves and those about us. As Beelzebub and his diabolic crew were the first examples of envy in heaven, so they are the last. No unquiet envious temper enters there: but love and benevolence circulate thro' all the celestial regions forever.

2. What an impious and blasphemous decree did King Darius ratify and publish! "Whosoever, said He, shall ask a petition of any God or man for 30 days together, save of King Darius, shall be cast into a den of lions. Yet how many in this gospelized land do voluntary execute this impious decree upon themselves by not praying once a month to any God. Let me therefore urge my Readers to this very important and beneficial duty, which the King of heaven as much commands as King Darius forbid; and the omission of which will be followed with as great yea, greater penalty than being cast into a lion's den. Were the King of heaven to publish a decree that all, who had omitted prayer for a long time, must never pray to Him for the future (tho' others should enjoy that privilege at any time) would not this be thought hard usage? Why then will you measure out such usage for yourselves as you would complain of, if God measured it out to you? Do you not know that they who live without prayer, live without God in the world?

3. To what shocking changes are mankind liable in this fluctuating earthly state! At the begining of this chap. we found Daniel rais'd by King Darius to a station of honour and preferment next to himself; but within a few verses after we find him doomed by the same King to the most shocking kind of Death; and that too for no real crime; unless performing an important duty was one! How little are high stations to be coveted! and how little can any earthly station or worldly condition be trusted unto! Our "standing here is as on a sea of glass:" Rev. xv. 2. and they who are placed highest, are always in danger of the greatest falls. This renders the Apostle's caution highly needful—"Let him that thinks he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

4. Was the rash and sinful day's work of Darius followed with

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such

such a dismal night of anguish; thence we may infer with Mr. Henry "that one of the best ways to enjoy a good night, is to keep a good conscience by day." Peace with God and conscience is not to be found in the ways of sin. Neither stately palaces, starry robes, glittering crowns, or downy pillows can preserve those hearts in tranquility which have been deeply wounded by guilt. How many, who have spent their days in sinful mirth and jollity, have had the most distressing nights, when darkness hath surrounded them, and they have seriously reflected upon their conduct by day. A very striking instance of this sort stands here before us. What distress was King Darius in for signing the dead-warrant of an innocent subject, and a most able faithful servant. How fitly might Darius adopt that plaintive language which a most ingenious female poet thus puts into his lips in p. 231 of her dramatic poems

"Not a slave within my empire from the Indian sea  
To the cold Caspian, but is more at ease  
Than I his Monarch! I have done a deed  
Will blot my honour with eternal stain!"

'Tis said that Darius went to his palace vex'd at himself for what He had done: neither royal food nor royal wine could support and cheer his drooping spirit. Amidst all the dainties of his palace He had not an heart to eat or drink any thing; "but passed the night fasting." 'Tis true, He went to bed; but his soft and downy couch could neither give rest to his body, nor to his disquieted mind: nay, we are inform'd, that his heavy heart could not bear the sound of those musical instruments, whose soft and melodious strains us'd to invite and bring on sleep at other times:

"No more his soul a charm in music finds:  
Music has charms for none but peaceful minds." *Ovid.*

3. What a strong Divine faith inspired King Darius when He could without the least hesitation say to Daniel—"Thy God whom thou servest continually *will* deliver thee from the lion's den"—How doth this faith of a Pagan shame the weak and wavering faith of many professing Christians, which never riseth above  
*peradventures*

*peradventures, or may-bees.* "It may be I shall be saved; there's a peradventure of it." With what languid spirits, feeble minds, and faltering steps must those move forward in Zion's paths, who are influenced by no stronger a faith than this! But alas! the faith of the very strongest believers has its ebbs as well as flowings. He who had said with the greatest assurance, "Thy God, whom thou servest continually *will* deliver thee," could do no more next morning than feebly ask "O Daniel, is thy God *able* to deliver thee from the lions?" Thus the faith of many grows or lessens, just as difficulties grow and lessen. Hence; unto Christians in health and prosperity, dangers, yea, death itself appear with an aspect different from what they usually do upon a nearer approach; and faith itself is too much influenc'd by present feelings, and by the different situations of objects it looks at. How earnestly therefore should we pray, that our faith, which appears strong in a day of ease and prosperity, may not, like that of Darius and Peter, be found weak in a day of temptation and adversity.

6. How strange a declaration was this. "King Darius set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labour'd till sun-set to deliver him, *but could not.*" Astonishing: What!—an absolute Monarch with his hands tied up so fast that neither his princely wisdom nor regal power enabl'd Him to rescue a favourite Friend and faithful servant from the present death-thre'tning danger! No, He could not do it, because the death-sentence had been already denounced; and the standing laws of his kingdom would not admit of its repeal. King Darius it seems adher'd to the same principle, that Henry IVth. of France afterwards did, who nobly said concerning himself:—"Tho' I am a King, two are above me, viz. God and the laws of my country."—Now, a difficulty of the like sort obstructed the salvation of the whole human race; who being in a state of actual sin or original depravity, stood condemn'd in law. The sentence was already gone forth—"The soul that sinneth shall die"—This law of God, like that of Medes and Persians, was not to be repeal'd. How then must the law be fulfilled, and law condemned-sinners spared? This difficulty (sufficient to have non-pluss'd the wisdom of Angels.) was remov'd by God sending his Son made of a woman made under the law, to die in the



sinner's room ; hereby the law was fulfilled in the same nature it had been broken ; and sin punish'd in the same nature it had been committed ; and so the penitent sinner not only spared, but eternally saved—All this shews the happy difference between the schemes and contrivances which human wisdom and love form ; and those which Divine wisdom and grace have plan'd.

7. That signal deliverance which the Almighty wrought for his faithful servant Daniel may serve to support the faith and hope of all his faithful servants under their various sufferings and sorrows. Tho' there be not a sameness between the condition set forth in this chap. and that of christians in our day ; yet there may be a similarity. In a spiritual sense all of us have fiercer lions to combat with, than were confined in the den here mention'd. Satan is expressly compar'd in scripture to a roaring lion ; and our road to heaven is said to be thro' the lion's den Cant. iv. even a King found it to be so when he said, " my soul is among lions" Ps. lviii. Yea may we not say of the world in general what a well known poet did ;

" A thousand savage beasts of prey

" Around this forest roam:—*However we may comfortably  
add with him*

" But Judah's lion guards the way ;

" And guides the strangers home."

Hence the lion's den now became a place of greater safety to Daniel than the King's palace.

8. From the high preferment conferr'd on Daniel both in the present reign of Darius, and of Cyrus his Successor (v. 28.) we may infer that they who generously sacrifice their worldly interest in God's cause will be no losers at last. He, who for conscience sake, lost, one high and honourable office, was afterwards advanc'd to two : this verified that proverb—Many have lost *for* God ; none have lost *by* Him. And what appears lost for Him, is rather lent to Him, whereof the interest is so large, that it sometimes brings in an hundred fold in this world, and life everlasting in the next : therefore, when ever duty and worldly interest, or duty and temporal safety clash and interfere, let it be our chief endeavour to be found in the road of duty, for that will assuredly terminate in safety and felicity, what ever losses and crosses harass us by the way.

*The selfish sinner convicted—  
A Meditation on Chap. V. 23.*

**T**HE God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways thou hast not glorified.

What an heart-piercing charge is this! Who but an impious Belshazzar, that had profan'd the vessels of the Temple, could be guilty of it? Yes; an inspir'd Apostle assures me that the greater part of mankind fall under the like charge Rom. III. 23. And why should my self-flattering heart suggest that I am not of that number? Have I then stately glorified God? But what is it to glorify Him? Certainly it cannot mean a making God more glorious than He is. For what can be added to that which is already infinite? But tho' neither I nor an Archangel can make God more glorious, nor his perfections brighter; I may in my thoughts and affections, in my words and actions unveil display, set forth, and adore those glories He is already possess'd of. And this is glorifying God in a scriptural sense. Have I glorified Him all these ways? Have I glorified Him in my thoughts? I may wonder that I can think of any thing in the world so much as of Him who fills the world and all things with his immense Being; and who has left prints of his creating fingers on every thing both in heaven and earth. Yet perhaps for one sober fixed thought I have of God; scores of them centre on creatures, yea on trifles. And is not this paying a superior regard to creatures than to my Maker?—Again, have I glorified God by loving that best of beings with the best of my affections? If I love any creature more than God, I set that creature above Him; whereby instead of glorifying I infinitely dishonor and debase Him. Once more, has my tongue glorified God in Prayer and Praise? In Prayer have I neither dishonor'd Him by the trifling manner in which I conducted it; nor sought self praise rather than the praise of God by those gifts of his which I exercised in prayer? Again, has that breath which I receiv'd from God, and which every moment depends on Him, been employ'd in praising Him for his daily mercys, or blaspheming Him  
by

by horrid oaths? If the latter, what a daring hell deserving wretch am I? Yet again, have I glorified God in the motives which have influenced my conduct? 1. Cor. x. 31. "Whether ye eat or drink; or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Have I done so? Do I use meat, drink and sleep not as a nurse to indolence or intemperance, but as a means to strengthen me for serving my Maker and my generation according to the will of God? Furthermore, have I aim'd at pleasing God in my general conduct; or only at gratifying sordid self? Have I not been as far from eying God in my actions as from eying the Emperor of China? For instance, did I not give alms chiefly with an intent to get a name, or to purchase heaven? When I pray'd did not my supplications proceed from a similar motive that prompts a criminal to supplicate his Judge, whom he neither loves or regards any farther than to serve his own selfish ends? When I have been rescu'd from some impending danger or death threatening disease, have I not ascrib'd it more to means and medicines than to the God of means? Or when a signal favo'r has been conferr'd on me have I not far more regarded the creature's hand which convey'd it than the Creator's hand which enabl'd and inclin'd that creature to bestow it?—And now let me pause a while, and consider—Are these the ungrateful returns I have made to that God on whom I depend for every breath I draw, and for every enjoyment I possess? What a wonder is it that the offended Divine Majesty did not long ago stop the breath which has so much dishonor'd Him. I am well assured, that so long as I act in religious matters from the foremention'd sordid selfish principle, both my soul and services will be accounted as "reprobate silver which the Lord hath rejected." But if, thro' Divine assistance, my general aim is to please God; my services, tho' very imperfect, will meet with Divine acceptance in this world and a glorious reward in the next; a reward, not indeed of debt, but of grace. If I glorify God here He will glorify me hereafter. But if I glorify Him not on earth how can I expect to live in eternal glory with Him in heaven. O when will sordid selfishness cease to be my ruling principle; and God become my all in all!



*The awaken'd guilty Sinner weigh'd in the balances,  
and found wanting—A Meditation on Chap. V. 27.*

**T**EKEL, thou art weighed in the balances,  
and art found wanting.

In such a tricking world as ours how needful are standard weights and measures! This has made me very cautious not to receive any gold, which falls short of standard weight. And is gold of greater value than my precious soul? God I am sure will weigh me on the great reckoning day: why then should I not weigh the state of my soul before I enter that eternal world, "where that which is crooked cannot be made straight, and where that which is wanting cannot be number'd" Eccl. 1.—For some months past I have felt a growing uneasiness of mind, being very doubtful whether my seeming graces and virtues bore the image of the King of heaven, and would prove standard weight if an impartial Divine hand were to hold the scales. Indeed 'tis a wonder I did not fall into doubt and fears of this sort many years ago. But I ascribe it to the following causes

*1st. I fancied myself to be good merely because I was not so bad as some others—*

but this was putting false weights into the opposite scale viz. not the word of God, but other men's grosser crimes. In this wrong manner did the self-deceiving pharisee weigh himself, when he said "God I thank thee that I am not as other men are extortioners unjust, adulterers. Luke xviii.

*2dly. I thought myself good because I was accounted or called such by all or most who knew me.*

But has not my self-flattering heart been too credulous in believing this? 'Tis a foible common to me, with the rest of mankind, to imagine that the world never errs in speaking too highly of us. But does the world indeed speak highly of me at *all times*? Alas! the prejudices,

prejudices, partialities and changing interests of mankind often prompt them to speak well and ill of the same persons almost with the same breath. And why do bad people speak well of me? Is it not because I too much resemble them; or because I have not zeal enough to reprove their sins or not spirit enough to claim my right when invaded by them. I dare not therefore rest the eternal salvation of my soul on so unstable a basis as the wavering breath of double tongued selfish mortals—

*2dly. I imagin'd that I had in a great measure kept the ten commandments—*

So grossly ignorant I once was of the true spirit of the Divine law, that I was ready to say with the Apostle during his state of spiritual blindness, "As touching the righteousness of the law I was blameless" Phil. iii. 6. Into this fatal mistake I was led by fancying that nothing was forbidden in the ten commandments except the gross sins therein specified. But a more enlighten'd mind has of late convinc'd me that the Divine law extends to thoughts, desires, affections and intentions as much as to outward acts; and to say with the Apo. in Rom. vii. "The law is holy and spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. Let me therefore try my state by weighing it with each one of the commandments. I begin with the First, which saith—

*"Thou shalt have no other Gods before me."*

And must I not prefer any God before my Maker? then certainly I must not prefer a mere creature before Him. But have I not often done this in my affections, if not in my judgment? Alas! creatures, sorry creatures, have been more freely admitted into my heart, and have found an higher seat there than that best of Beings who deserves to be loved with all my heart. And while I have thus deified creatures, I have in some sort annihilated my Creator, at least in my thoughts and affections; and have been such a practical atheist as St. Paul thus describes "They profess to know God, but in works deny Him; being alienated from the life of God, and without God in the world." How many years did  
I live

I live in the world without any heart felt sense of God—I should now have proceeded to the 2d. Commandment which forbids idolatry. But the perusal of a foregoing Meditation on *image idolatry* and *heart-idolatry compar'd*, soon convinc'd me that TEKEL was my due and must be my doom. I therefore pass on to the 3d. Commandment, which I once surmized did condemn nothing but cursing and swearing: a sin which I always refrain'd from, and therefore thought myself guiltless concerning this commandment; not considering that the very letter of it condemns me: for it saith—“*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*”—i. e. in a vain careless thoughtless manner: But ah? how often have I taken it in vain not merely in common conversation, but in the solemn duty of prayer; when those awful names, God, Jehovah and Lord made no deeper impressions on my mind than the most common vulgar names of James or John, by which we call one another. TEKEL therefore belongs to me a third time. Let me then put myself into the scales with the next 4th Commandment, which saith—“*Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy; in it thou shalt not do any work*” i. e. any unnecessary worldly work. The latter part of this command I have strictly kept; for conscience would never permit me to follow my secular calling on the sabbath day. But did I never do worse things on that day? Did I not mispend many precious sabbaths in journeys of trade or sensual pleasure, contrary to an express command in Isa. lviii. 13? Or did I not bury my sabbaths too much in superfluous sleep? or trifle them away at home? or little better than trifle them away at the house of God? Certainly this was not to keep the sabbath-day holy; for that consists in cherishing holy thoughts, in breathing forth holy desires, in speaking holy words, and doing holy actions on that day: which four things are so ponderous, that I see the scale fall with a mighty force, denouncing Tekel against me—Let me therefore pass on to the 5th Commandment, which saith—“*Honour thy Father and thy Mother*”—The word “*Father*” here I am told, includes others besides our immediate Parents, viz. God our heavenly Father, and *Kings* whom scripture styles nursing Fathers; Isa. xlix. Yea *Magistrates* and Ministers are expressly call'd *Fathers* in Job xxix. and 1 Cor. iv. Now, can I truly say that my conduct towards the Fathers of my Country, and the Fathers of  
my



my soul has always carried weight when balanced against this commandment? With regard to Fathers of my country, whether Kings or Magistrates, have I not grudg'd them that reasonable tribute which was due to them? As to Fathers of the Soul, have I not too much despis'd and slighted their ministerial office, their abilities and instructions? Lastly, with reference to Parents, those Fathers of my flesh have I not undervalu'd and despis'd, thwarted and contradicted them, or returned them peevish, pert and saucy answers; Yea, like undutiful Ham, some times shamefully expos'd them? But I perceive the scale begins to turn; and my own conscience tells me, I may write TEKEL a 5th time. Let me now put the 6th Commandment into the scale—*Thou shalt not kill*—Of murder, there are various kinds and degrees. Let me then ask conscience; Did I never by bad advice, bad example, or sinful negligence do any thing towards murdering the souls of my children, servants and others? Did I never practise such oppression or extortion as tended to take away another's livelyhood? which was a considerable step towards taking away his life. Did I never in a pet or passion with myself or another dead? Did I never harbour malice and cruel revenge? Why, this 6th commandment not only condemns actual murder; but lays the ax to these bitter roots from which it springs: therefore said the Apostle "Whosoever hated his Brother is a murderer 1 John III. 15. In short; Did I never by intemperance on one hand, or excessive needless toil and penuriousness on the other contract a mortal distemper?—What a ponderous weight is there in this command which consists of four syllables only! I must now put the 7th Commandment into the scale, which saith—*Thou shalt not commit adultery*—To the letter of this law I plead, "*not guilty*;" but the spirit of it condemns me; because it not only forbids adultery but fornication, and self pollution (Gen. xxxviii. 9, 10.) yea all acts of debauchery in general; in a word, it condemns a lustful heart as well as life; therefore said our Lord "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart"—Finding myself wanting in this commandment, let me try if I can succeed better in the 8th. which forbids *stealing*: a sin so shameful as well as criminal that I have shun'd it with abhorrence: but have I been equally innocent with regard to every thing virtually forbidden in  
this

this command, viz. not mere robbery; but all dishonesty in trade; all counterfeiting of goods; and all false weights and measures. But there's no need of throwing more weight into this scale; which already falls with a mighty vengeance; and proclaims, Tekel, to the sinner that's laid in the other scale, The 9th Commandment saith—“*Thou shalt not bear false witness*.”—Here so many things are implicitly condemn'd, besides taking false oaths; viz. lying, &c. that the following scrutiny is highly needful—Did I never tell a lie either to get gain, to cover a fault, or to escape the lash? Has the language of my lips been always the meaning of my heart? Did I never prevaricate or dissemble? never extravagantly commend or discommen'd persons and things beyond what conscience dictated? Did I never knowingly disguise nor strain truth in relating matters? Did I never pay those fustian compliments which were contrary to simplicity and godly sincerity? Or, do I now deny every of the foresaid charges? Thus doing, I fear I add another lye to the number. I shall now try my state a 10th time by putting myself into the balances with the 10th Commandment which saith—“*Thou shalt not covet*.”—The Divine law I perceive comes closer and closer, and searcheth deeper and deeper. From hand-sins forbidden in the 8th commandment, it proceeds to tongue sins in the 9th; and now to heart sins in the 10th; which condemns all evil desires and propensities in general; and avarice in particular. Avarice consists in greedily hankering after another person's property; and in being discontent with our own. And am not I sometimes chargeable with this? Do I never envy and grudge people for what they enjoy and I want? Am I never dissatisfied with the shape or infirm constitution of body which my Maker gave me, nor with that scanty share of this world's enjoyments which his providence hath carv'd for me? Surely my conscience cannot deny all these charges—Thus saith the awaken'd sinner, I have weigh'd myself with every part of the Divine law; and this is the unhappy result—

“Thou art weigh'd in these balances, and art found wanting”—

Yea I expect to fall under a more tremendous sentence than this; namely that in Gall. III. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth

not

not in all things written in the book of the law to do them—But let me not despair. Tho' I can claim no title to salvation by a sinless obedience to the law, I have another cast for it, for I fancied—*That a merciful God will overlook all my involuntary failings and short comings*—This was my 4th prop. But, before I rest the salvation of my soul on this basis, it concerns me to enquire, whether I have not so shamefully sinned against and abused Divine mercy as to fear, lest even this mild attribute of Deity turns the scales against me. Had I only broken God's laws, and injur'd his Justice, Divine mercy might have stepped in; and being embrac'd, might possibly have saved me; But what can I expect who have discover'd as much hardness and opposition against the loving calls and proffer'd grace of the gospel, as I have shewn disobedience to the precepts of the law; and who have tramp'd on the mercy of God not so seldom as a thousand times; and have abused the gifts of the Divine bounty thro' each period of my life. Do I imagine that this often abus'd mercy will save me when both law and gospel condemn me; Besides, God has other attributes besides mercy, viz. Justice, Truth, and Holiness: Now, when these ponderous attributes are laid in the other scale, what can one single attribute do for me—And now all my former pleas for salvation are cut off except one, namely "*That my sincerity and good heart would make amends for all the failings of my life*"—But what ignorance and self-deceit was this; that I should boast of heart-sincerity; and yet harbour ill will against others at the very time that I spake them fair and professed much friendship! How could I think that the suppos'd sincerity and purity of my heart would overbalance all the enormities of my life; seeing my heart is really worse than my life; for I find it what the Prophet describes it to be, namely "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" Jer. xvii. 9. And now, when I find both heart and life so full of sin; and in so many instances condemn'd by a larger hand writing than that which denounced Belshazzar's doom; namely the ten commandments written by God's own hand, my guilty conscience meditates terror. However, very thankful I am that the Almighty has hitherto spar'd my guilty life; and that I have not been so awfully and suddenly cut off as that Monarch was. How short a warning was given Him before the killing stroke smote Him! "In that night



night was King Belshazzar slain," said Daniel. Yes, on that same doleful night, in which He had been drinking and rioting with his pot-companions, was his death-warrant written by the fingers of God; also sent and read to Him; and executed upon Him. And oh what a lamentable condition was the poor King in when the soldier's killing weapon pierc'd his vitals at a time that fumes of wine had probably so disorder'd his head as to render him incapable of preparing for death; or of thinking seriously upon it. And why have I been indulg'd with a longer reprieve? but because the Lord is long suffering; not willing that I should perish; but come to repentance 2 Pet. III. 9.

*The upright Christian weighed in the balances, and found standard weight—being a second Meditation on Chap. V. 27.*

**TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances.**

Finding my mind at this time neither depressed by grief, nor much elevated with joy, or beclouded with melancholy but clear and calm: and not unlike a pair of scales which hang moderately level; I choose the present favourable season, in which to try my eternal state: and I hope, the issue of it will prove a support to me during life, and a reviving cordial at the hour of death. And may that Divine Spirit, who guides souls into all truth, give me such light and insight into his unerring word, and my own deceitful heart, that I may not pass any sentence upon my state now contrary to what will be pronounced upon it at the Judgment day! but weigh myself in just balances. And what are they? Certainly—"not the balances of partial and prejudic'd fellow-mortals"—Were the eternal states of mankind to be determined by the suffrage of a partial world, what numbers of vile hypocrites would shine in eternal glory, while many good Christians must be laid in chains of everlasting darkness. Alas! if matters of this sort must have been decided by a prejudiced world, how ill would it have gone with the blessed martyrs in the next world, who were condemn'd as here-

sicks and pests of society in this ! How ill would it have gone with the holy Apostles when they were reputed the off scouring of the world ; also with our blessed Saviour when he stood condemned at the bar of Pontius Pilate. Why then should I think worse of myself, or of my eternal state for suffering reproaches in such good company as this ? I can say with the Apostle " With me it is a small matter that I should be judged by man's judgment "—Let me therefore try myself by a more steady unerring standard ; namely Conscience within, and the unerring word of God without. 1st. Conscience ; this being the deputy judge which the Almighty hath seated in the human breast, I regard and reverence it as the voice of God. But in an hour of spiritual darkness and temptation how often has this voice within accused and condemned me, suggesting that my heart was not right with God. This hath brought to mind those awful words in 1 John iii. 20. where 'tis in effect said, " If our own hearts condemn us, much more may an omniscient God, who knoweth more against us than we do against ourselves. But shall I therefore eternally condemn myself for that which conscience hastily suggested in a dark and melancholy hour ? No ; did not conscience write Tekel against Job, Heman, and multitudes of the most eminent tempted saints who judg'd themselves hypocrites and reprobates at a time when their graces and virtues were more precious than fine gold.—But after all ; do I derive no satisfaction from this bosom monitor ? Yes, always when my mind is clear and calm ; for then I can with exquisite delight adopt those words in 2 Cor. i. 12, " Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity we have had our conversation in the world, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God"—I therefore conclude that conscience, much as it upbraids me at times, does in general bear witness to the sincerity of my heart, and the safety of my state.—Let me now pass on, and bring my heart and life to another touchstone ; namely God's unerring word, consisting of law and gospel : with reference to the former I have been long convinc'd " that by the works of the law no flesh living can be justified in the sight of God Rom. iii. 20 : so that the law can neither justify nor sanctify : instead of mortifying sin it strangely irritates it ; and revives a sense of guilt rather than appeazeth it. Rom. vii. 8, 9. On these considerations

I as much renounce all meritorious claims to pardon, justification and eternal life by any works which my own polluted hands and more polluted heart ever wrought, as if I had never perform'd one good work during my whole life. Do I then reject the law? yes, as a covenant of works, but not as a rule of life. In obeying the Divine law I think I am as conscientious, careful and diligent as if I expected to purchase heaven by it. Three properties has my obedience which I apprehend no hypocrite can lay a just claim to it. It is not stark stinging and servile, but liberal, free and filial; to which I am sweetly drawn by the cords of love; but not driven by a slavish fear, and the scorpion-lashes of a guilty conscience. With the Apostle I can truly say, that "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" This I take to be a certain token that the Lord hath fulfilled in me that new-covenant promise Jer. xxxi. 35. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God; and they shall be my people." 2dly. In my obedience I think I make as much conscience of the principle I act from, and of the ends I aim at, as of the act itself: that I also pay as great a regard to secret duties, which have no human eye to admire, nor human tongue to applaud them, as I do to those which are acted upon the open theatre of the world. 3dly. Whereas formerly I was such a vile slave to some sins, and had such a rooted antipathy to some duties, as render'd my obedience extremely partial; I can now truly say with the pious psalmist—"I have respect to all God's commandments, and esteem all his precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way." If I strive more against any one sin than another, 'tis against my darling iniquity. And if I take more pains in one duty than another, 'tis that unto which my deprav'd heart is most averse—But tho' this my obedience to the Divine law is I trust, complete, 'tis not sinless: Every day I more or less deviate from the perfect law of God. But then a gospel remedy is provided; viz. repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ Acts xx. 21. Let me then try whether my Faith and Repentance will carry weight in the Gospel scales. With reference to the former, I sometimes fear whether I am a genuine penitent, because at times I find much hardness of heart. But 'tis some relief to consider that my hardness is always a grief to me; and I am affected because I feel not my-  
self



self more affected. I confess indeed that my convictions and sorrow for sin have not been so piercing as I wish'd them to be; but they have been such as render'd all sin hateful and burthensom to me; even sinful thoughts as well as sinful acts; and the depravity of my heart as well as the out-flowings of sin in my life. So that, I trust, my repentance hath not been superficial, but deep; also evangelical: for not only do I dread sin because 'tis damning; but lothe it, because hateful in itself and polluting to me: I likewise mourn over it not merely that *it may be*, but *because it is forgiven* Ezek. xvi. 63. So far as I know my own heart, my penitence flows from that generous principle of redeeming love which mark'd the repentance of gospel Converts in Zech. xii. 10. "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn. My habitual aim and endeavour to bring forth fruit meet for repentance; therefore the conduct I condemn, I strive to amend; and the sins I confess in prayer, I watch and guard against in practice—The last thing I am to weigh is MY FAITH. Now I think I have received that Faith which carries sin-burden'd souls to Christ, relying on his sin-atoning sacrifice for pardon and his imputed righteousness for justification; in a word that faith which has gospel promises for its foundation, and gospel obedience for its superstructure. My Faith indeed is not equally strong at all times: but when I lose the faith of assurance, which enabl'd me to say boldly—"My beloved is mine, and I am his"—I still retain the Faith of reliance and adherence by which I can always say—"Tho' He slay me, yet will I trust in Him Job xiii. 15. In short, when my Faith is at its lowest ebb, I can appeal to my Saviour as that weeping parent did "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief" Mark ix. 24.

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*Zeal, Courage and Constancy in Divine Worship exemplified—being a Meditation on Chap. VI. 10.*

**N**OW when Daniel knew that the Writing was signed he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem,

falem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

Having with admiration, often perus'd the hardships and shocking sufferings of christian martyrs, especially the noble spirit which bore them up, and carried them thro'; I now sit down to contemplate the equal hazards and hardships which an old-testament Jew encounter'd in the same good cause; and the equally brave spirit which supported him under them. The specimen stands in full view before me in the present passage which I shall now consider in its separate parts with a view to humble me for being so far out-strip'd by one, whose religion was less excellent than mine; also to be a stimulating spur unto greater fortitude and constancy in the service of my God—I am here inform'd 1st. What situation and posture Daniel put himself into when he knew the horrid and blasphemous decree, which struck at his life, was sign'd by the King; even that decree which his supplanters had so craftily contriv'd in order to make, not indeed his crimes, (for they confessed he had none v. 5.) but his own conscience and integrity the occasion of his downfall; he did not in these threatening circumstances, as might be expected, abscond during the thirty days in which the decree was in force; but stood his ground; being well assured, that he had now a fair opportunity of honouring his God publickly; and of shewing how much he preferred the divine favour and his own duty before life itself. Consequently, tho' he was a courtier and the King's dependant he had so much integrity, fortitude and self-denial, as to act contrary to his royal Master's impious mandate; yea to act contrary to it as soon as he knew the Writing was sign'd. But was he not too hasty in doing it thus soon when the consequence was likely to be fatal? No; when either sin or duty are clear, (as they were to Daniel in the present crisis) demurs become dangerous. In such a case, saith a late quoted Poetess,

The shortest pause is much too long;

And to delib'rate is to sin.

*Mrs. More.*

But to return: when Daniel knew the writing was sign'd, he retired to his own house, where "the windows being open in his

chamber towards Jerusalem, he kneeled and pray'd and gave thanks before his God, as he had done aforetime." But why did Daniel let the casement window of his chamber stand open while he pray'd? Certainly not with a design of setting off self, and gaining the reputation of being religious. "There could be no room for that temptation in heathen Babylon, where it was accounted a reproach rather than an honour to worship the God of Israel. Neither did he set open his casement in time of prayer, saith Mr. Bredbury, from any low conceit that a prayer could fly to heaven more easily, and reach God's ear sooner thro' an open than a shut casement. Nor is it supposable that one so benevolent as Daniel would set open his casement at prayer-time with a view to spite and provoke his accusers, or to bid defiance to his kind Sovereign, by breaking his laws before his face. Besides, 'tis not said, he set open the casement which faced the King's palace, or the houses of his enemies, but that which faced Jerusalem: But why the casement facing Jerusalem? Most probably to comply with the mode of prayer prescrib'd at the dedication of Solomon's temple in a parallel case 1 Kings viii. 46, &c. "If thy people be carried away captives into the land of the enemy afar off; (as Daniel was at this time); and if there they pray towards the city Jerusalem and this temple; then hear thou their prayer and supplication." In conformity to this rule we find the pious psalmist saying "In thy fear will I worship towards thy holy temple" The same method did the prophet Jonah take in his IIId. chap. But why did old testament worshipers look towards the temple when they pray'd?—No doubt because there those sacrifices were daily offer'd which represented the sacrifice of Christ, thro' whom alone prayer finds Divine acceptance. Having observ'd *Daniel's remarkable posture when he pray'd*; let me IIIdly. consider the frequency of it—'Tis said—"he kneeled three times a day, and pray'd"—Thus he imitated the pious psalmist who said; "morning, evening and at noon will I pray, and he will hear my voice" Nor can I deem this too often; for if my body needs recruiting-food thrice a day; shall I think this too often to betake myself to that spiritual meal, *prayer*? And if Daniel would not lose one season of prayer, no not to save his life; what a reproach is it for me to let comparative trifles block my way to the throne of grace, not for a single time, but often! Yet has not this been the case? Sometimes intruding company; at



other times the cares and affairs of this transitory life ; but more commonly a backward heart have too frequently induced me to withhold the evening or morning sacrifice of prayer and praise. But did such things as these obstruct Daniel's way to a throne of grace ? no, nor far greater. Tho' he had the affairs of a whole Kingdom to transact, as Prime Minister, this did not induce him to neglect daily prayer. Yea, tho' the decree of a King was levelled against him and threaten'd him with a den of lions, if he pray'd in his house ; even this did not deter him from that duty, nor induce him to be more relax in it. Here then I stand convicted and condemn'd by the better practice of an Old Testament Jew. How heart cutting is it to consider that I, a professing Christian, who enjoy superior advantages relating to prayer, such as a more open way to the throne of grace thro' the rent-veil of my Saviour's sacrifice and intercession, and the assisting influences of God's Spirit more largely promis'd ; also a greater number of gospel promises to plead and rely upon ; I say that I who enjoy such superior advantages as these should have been so far out-stripped by a Jew—But did not the unusual danger and distress which Daniel was now in arouse him to a more frequent and fervent practice of prayer at this than at any other times ? No ; this therefore brings me to a 11Id. thing which I admire in the prayer of this Jew ; namely *his constancy in it*. 'Tis said “ he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed *as he had aforetime* ” Some uneven temper'd people, in a fit of sickness, or other death-threatening danger, or after some gross sin has alarmed their consciences, will abound, yea, superabound in prayer ; but when the impending storm is blown over, instead of praying often in one day, they degenerate into the ill habit of not praying above once or twice a week in their families. But Daniel, I find, was not a person of that stamp : for he was as constant and earnest in prayer when danger and death seem'd afar off, as when they appear'd to be at the door ready to break in. Thrice a day was the stated measure of his devotions both in prosperity and adversity—IV. The last thing observable in Daniel's worship at this time, was *the matter of which it consisted*, namely, *Petition and Thanksgiving*. “ He prayed and gave thanks before God,” saith this verse. It might have been expected that a man in so much danger both from lions, and malicious men, who were worse than lions, would now have spent his whole time of prayer in mourn-

ing over his present unhappy situation, and in supplicating deliverance from it : and, (as the last quoted Author well expresseth it) " that no praises nor thanksgivings could be expected from a man ready to be devoured by savage lions ; but as no worldly trouble can make christian believers absolutely wretched ; so none should make them silent either in prayer or praise. They have mercies to thank God for of an infinite higher value than can be taken from them in this life. So that Christians may march thro' fire and the lion's den shouting in the prospect of what comes after"—Thus I have taken a complete survey of that bright mirrour of zeal, courage, and constancy in religion, which the verse under present consideration holds up to my view as a pattern of imitation.—But alas, I cannot so much as look intently at it without blushing and being confounded, to find so great a disparity between Daniel's spirit and mine. Daniel was neither afraid nor ashamed to espouse the cause of religion even in an idolatrous heathen Land ; but am not I at times ashamed to make any discoveries of it even in a christian country ? 'Tis true, I am not so mean-spirited and sneaking as those who put on and throw off a religious Garb and religious discourse according to the particular places they live in or the company they converse with. But have not I verged too much that way ? whereby I have drawn down upon my guilty head that awful sentence of our Lord in Mark viii. 38. " Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this sinful generation, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He cometh to judge the world." Again, when I have heard profane creatures curse and swear, did I not rather choose to bring guilt upon my own conscience by letting them go quietly on in that sin, than give them a friendly check or reproof tending to reclaim them ? Or, when I heard religion or religious people lash'd by the tongue of slander have I not been cowardly silent, without putting in a word to defend injur'd innocence ? Yea when fashionable visitants have come under my roof, has not a dastardly spirit induc'd me to rob God of a morning or evening sacrifice ? But would I have done it, if I had possessed any portion of Daniel's religious fortitude, who openly avow'd and worshiped the God of Israel even in heathen Babylon ; and adhered so firmly to his God and duty that neither the combin'd malice of 120 Princes, nor the bloody decree of a savage King, nor yet the rage of lions could remove him an hair's breadth from his duty.

I confess indeed that Daniel's religious courage has been call'd in question by some, who ask: "where was it when he durst not stand up for the pure worship of God, nor testify against idolatry in the case of the golden image, nor cleave to his three persecuted countrymen when they were to be burn'd alive? 'Tis answer'd; it was where himself was; being probably sent by his royal Master to transact state affairs abroad (agreeable to his office) while the golden image was to be worship'd. Or if his courage fail'd him for once, so may that of the most intrepid warrior and greatest christian for a time; witness spirited Peter in the high priest's hall? But 'tis objected, that the courage which prompted Daniel to bid defiance to the lion's den, was no better than fool-hardiness: at least 'twas more an act of culpable rashness than of true valour in the cause of religion; Had his zeal say they been regulated by prudence, he would have confin'd his devotions to his own breast, or to some secret apartment for so short a time as thirty days. By this means no umbrage would have been given to the King or his court; but the good man might still have kept his high and useful station; whereby he would have continued a general blessing to the King and his Kingdom, and a screen to his own captive countrymen. But as a fore-quoted Divine finely expresses it—"Daniel brought more glory to God by losing his place, than he ever could have done by keeping it on such dishonourable terms"—Besides, when blasphemy against God and his worship roar'd aloud from the King's throne through Babylon, yea through the whole Kingdom, was it a matter of indifference for the Lord's Prophet and Trumpeter, whom his providence had sent on purpose into that idolatrous country to bear witness for Him, and his worship, was it, I say, a matter of indifference for this messenger of God to be silent all this while, and to muffle up his Divine Master's glory under a shameful veil? As to the good consequences supposed to arise from a smother'd zeal and a cramp'd performance of duty, I have often remark'd that a righteous providence generally defeats them; while it as frequently encourages a well-meant zeal and activity in the cause of God; and crowns them with success in the end, whatever great and formidable difficulties block'd up the way. Daniel at the close of this chapter is an ample specimen of it.



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C H A P. VII.

*The Rise and Fall of the four great Empires of the  
World: And the Establishment of Messiah's ever-  
lasting Kingdom.*

**I**N the first year of Belshazzar King of Baby- Ver. 1  
lon Daniel had a dream and visions of his  
head upon his bed, &c.

The Prophet Daniel regarding the order of matter more than  
the order of time, put together matters of the same kind in the  
former six chapters; and matters of another nature in the latter  
six. In the former the visionary dreams of others, with his own  
interpretation of them, are recorded: in these latter his own vision-  
ary dreams came on. In his first dream recorded in this chap.  
his contemplative thoughts were carried out into the great sea,  
which to him appear'd to be thrown into a mighty commotion and  
toss, occasion'd by high winds blowing fiercely upon it from all  
quarters, as if they were in strife with each other. The winds  
and waves, which were now in this preternatural commotion, re-  
presented providence being mightily at work and just ready to give  
birth to some big and important events. What were they? Why,  
four great Beasts of different forms emerging out of the sea.  
These four Beasts, said the Angel in verse 17, are four Kings  
which shall arise out of the earth. The different natures and  
forms of these Beasts are thus describ'd. The first, saith Daniel, 4  
was like a lion *that King of beasts*; having the wings of an eagle  
*that King of birds*. Now this first beast, by the common suffrage  
of Expositors, represents the King of Babylon and Chaldea, who  
in other passages as well as this, is emblemiz'd by a lion and eagle.  
Jeremiah, predicting the future rapid march of King Nebuchad-  
nezzar towards Judea, saith chap. iv. 7. The lion is come up  
from his thicket to make thy land desolate. Again, in chap.  
xlviii. 40, the same Monarch is compar'd to an eagle also: yea

Ezekiel represents him as a great eagle carrying away a great bough from Judea to Babylon Ezek. xvii. 3. The King of Babylon is decipher'd by this double emblem because he had often discover'd an eagle-like sagacity and swiftness in seeking his prey, and darting down upon it; also a lion-like strength and generosity in treating it after it was catch'd. Daniel himself had seen this in the swift marches of Nebuchadnezzar's army towards Jerusalem, in the lion-like strength put forth in conquering it, and a lion-like generosity in using his captive prisoners mercifully—'Tis now high time to consider what became of this double form'd mongrel Beast. "I beheld, adds Daniel in the  
4 same verse, till the wings of this Eagle-lion were plucked." By whom? even by King Cyrus when He conquer'd Babylon. "I also, says He, beheld a man's heart given to this Beast; i. e. it was part beast and part man. And was not this actually the condition of King Nebuchadnezzar when struck with the frenzy specified in chap. IV.—I now proceed to the second monstrous Beast which Daniel saw rising out of the sea, namely that which re-  
5 sembled "a Bear; and which rais'd itself up against the former Beast; and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and they said unto it; *arise, devour much flesh.*" By this monstrous Beast Divines fitly understand King Cyrus, who is repe'tedly mentioned by name in this prophecy. By the three ribs between the teeth of this royal Bear we may understand the three Kingdoms of Babylon, Egypt and Lydia, which Cyrus conquer'd and made a prey of—I now proceed to the 3d. Beast by which a 3d.  
6 King and Kingdom are emblemiz'd. "After this, said Daniel, I beheld, *viz. in my night visions*, and lo another like a Leopard, which had four wings of a fowl growing upon its back; the beast had also four heads; and dominion (*viz. over the other Beasts*) was given to it"—The 21st. verse of the next viii. chap. shews that this 3d. Beast which devoured the savage Bear represented the 1st. King of Greece, *viz. Alexander the Great*, here compar'd to the Leopard, which is a very swift animal of itself; but when a double pair of wings are supposed to be added to it, this gives it a preternatural velocity. Now how exactly did King Alexander resemble this Beast of prey in his military marches and exploits. Dean Prideaux in his historical connections observes that "He was impetuous and fierce in his war-



like expeditions, pursuing his prey like a Leopard, and coming Ver, upon his enemies with such extraordinary speed as if He flew with a double pair of wings.\* But wherefore did this Leopard appear with four heads? 'Tis answer'd; in order to represent the division of Alexander's Empire into four lesser Kingdoms fully emblemiz'd by four heads—After Daniel had taken a complete view of the 3d. Beast, "Behold a 4th. presented itself before him in his night visions; a beast dre'dful, terrible and exceeding strong; and it had great iron teeth, with which it devoured and brake in pieces, &c." This is thus explain'd by the Angel in verse 23d. "The 4th Beast, saith He, shall be the 4th Kingdom upon earth; (i. e. the 4th after the three former, viz. Babylon, Persia, and Greece,) and which would devour the earth" i. e. conquer the world. But what Kingdom was this? Certainly the Roman 7 empire, which is aptly figur'd by a voracious Beast spreading destruction thro' the whole earth almost: for Pagan Rome carried war thro' the world, and caus'd more carnage and devastation in it than any beast of prey ever did. Four singular properties are in the foregoing verses ascrib'd to this hieroglyphic Beast; each of them peculiarly applicable to the Roman empire. Ist. "It subdued and brake in pieces"; what? even all the nations which had been subjects of the former empires. IIly. "It stamped the residue under its feet" i. e. the prey which it could not gorge and feed upon nor appropriate to its own use, it vented its spleen against by trampling upon it with indignation. And whereas the three former Beasts had particular names and shapes ascrib'd to them (as Lion, Bear and Leopard) 'tis observable that this IVth has no particular name or form appropriated to it; therefore it

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admirably

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\* The following historical fact illustrates the propriety of representing Alexander by a winged Leopard. When that Hero demanded a strong Fort which stood on an high rock in an enemies country to be surrender'd to him; its Governor sent him word that if he could fly he might possibly take it; otherwise not. Hereupon Alexander attack'd and brake into it the very next night. This induc'd the Governor to say—"Alexander most certainly had wings."—Dr. Gill, in loc,

Ver. admirably emblemiz'd the Roman government, which so often chang'd its particular form that it could not be describ'd by any individual and fixed hyeroglyphic.\* Lastly, 'tis said to have ten horns, which the Angel thus explains in a following verse :

24. "The ten horns are ten Kings which shall arise out of this one Kingdom," or belong to it. Those ten Kingdoms are enumerated by Mr. Joseph Mede. To proceed—Besides the ten horns which represented ten secular Principalities within the Roman empire, mention is also made of another little horn which sprouted  
8 forth after the rest. "Behold there came up another little horn before whom three of the first horns were plucked up"—These three horns or little kingdoms which were broken by the little horn are by Mr. Mede conjectur'd to be Ist. The Exarchate of Ravanna. IIIdly. The Kingdom of the Greeks. IIIIdly. The Kingdom of the Franks ; all which the Popes in after ages seiz'd either by power or policy. For this little horn full of eyes is by Protestant Divines suppos'd to be the Popedom or Rome Papal which sprang from Rome Pagan. Hence it is here called by Da-  
23 niel and afterwards by the Angel "diverse from all the rest"; because all the rest were secular Kingdoms ; whereas this last was ecclesiastic. Again, as this little horn sprang out of the other horns ; so did Rome Papal from Rome Pagan. Furthermore, as the little horn was full of eyes (those well known emblems of segacity) by which, and not by its own strength, it destroy'd the former greater horns ; so Rome Papal overturn'd Rome Pagan more by policy than by power. Once again ; 'tis very observable that Papal Rome acted over the very same things which the Beast  
25 with this little horn is here said to act. For instance, "'tis said to change times and laws"—And has not Rome Papal done both these ? Yet it has claim'd a power to make Kings, and unmake them again ; to pardon sins and grant indulgences ; to invent and impose new modes of worship, and new articles of Faith ; in a word, not only to abrogate human, but even to dispense with Di-  
vine

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\* Often chang'd its particular form) four times at least ; being  
• First a Common-wealth ; then an Empire ; afterwards an Exarchate ; and lastly a Popedom.

vine laws ; as by setting aside the second commandment, and Ver.  
 splitting the tenth in order to make up the number ten. Again,  
 this Beast with its little horn full of eyes is said " to speak great  
 (*viz. blasphemous*) things against the most high." This did Pa- 25  
 pal Rome, when it call'd a woman *the Mother of God* and the  
 Pope *our Lord God the Pope*. Once more, as the Beast with his  
 little horn is said " to make war against the Saints ; to weary  
 them out ; and for a while to prevail against them" (and by the  
 way, the very same is ascertained concerning the Beast in Rev.  
 xiii. 7.) ; so this was unhappily verified in those cruel persecu-  
 tions which Papal Rome rais'd against Protestants during several  
 ages. Lastly, the final destruction of this Beast is precisely the  
 same with that inflicted upon the Beast in Rev. xvii. 16. (" for  
 both are said to be burnt with fire") Therefore as the latter 11  
 Beast describ'd in Revelations plainly referr'd to Antichristian  
 Rome, so must this describ'd by Daniel\*. To pass on—After  
 Daniel's discouraging heart saddening vision of the Beast, which  
 represented Rome Pagan and Papal, and of the devastations and  
 desolations it made on the world in general and upon the people  
 of God in particular ; the chap. concludes with a most cheering  
 heart reviving vision, representing the victory which the Saints 18  
 would at last obtain over the Beast and over all other enemies. 22  
 This is beautifully delineated in certain verses which will furnish 27  
 us with some delightful contemplations under the subsequent

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\* Seeing (as has been already shewn in part) the very same description is given of the Beast in Revelation that's here given of the 4th Beast, in Daniel, they must needs have been the same. St. John's Beast as well as Daniel's is said to rise out of the sea with ten horns Rev. xiii. 1. Those ten horns, like these in Daniel, are called ten Kings Rev. xvii. 12. St. John's Beast is also said to blaspheme God ; to make war upon the Saints, and to overcome them for a time Chap. xiii. 6, 7. but at last to be overcome by them Rev. xv. 2. Also to meet with the same fiery destruction that Daniel's Beast in the present chap. met with.—See Rev. xvii. 8.



*Remarks and Inferences.*

1. What a just tho' mortifying emblem doth the 2d verse in this chap. exhibit of that restless world which we inhabit. How fitly is it emblemized by the great sea which, besides its being an unsteady and restless element of itself, becomes abundantly more so when lash'd by fierce and bickering winds. How grievously is the sea then toss'd ! How tremendous are its concussions ? How violent its convulsions ! This world, like the sea, is a very unsettl'd place. Death and Providence are making awful changes in it every day, yea every hour. But the pride, ambition, avarice, injustice and unsanctified passions of its inhabitants do often make even this solid dry land as restless and uneasy a situation as the sea in a storm. When passion raiseth storms in people's own breasts or in families ; or when ambition kindles national wars, how grievous is all this !

2. What a debasing figure of warrior Kings doth this chap. hold up to our view—"The four Beasts, said the celestial interpreter, are four Kings." Strange ? must the highest and grandest personages on earth be resembled to beasts, to wild beasts, yea to savage monsters ? Are not these comparisons exaggerated, and too degrading ? No ; for tho' wise equitable and peaceful Kings are some of the choicest blessings on earth ; many crowned heads have been the greatest scourges and plagues to it. To gratifie their own ambition, avarice, and insatiable thirst of domination they have sacrificed a greater number of precious lives than the most savage Leopards, bears or lions ever devoured. The lives of ten thousands of their own subjects have they flung away in a single battle for the monster death to swallow at one morsel. Their frequent quarrels, whether right or wrong, must be reveng'd by human blood spilt without measure, and too often without mercy. Hence 'tis very observable, that the more fully to set forth the mischiefs of bad Kings, the inspired oracles do here emblemize them not by one individual wild beast (that would not suffice) ; but by two united into one ; as by a beast part lion and part eagle ; also by a fierce leopard having not only four swift legs, but as many wings to spread destruction the more expeditiously

ously and effectually. In the mean time, what small reason have we to admire and extol (as too many do) the generality of those battles which are fought on the stage of this world ; many of which are little better than those of beasts of prey. What humane person could view with real pleasure brutes fighting and worrying each other ; or behold with delight a savage Bear return from manslaughter with three ribs of a man's body between its teeth. However, to these shocking fights are the battles fought by King Cyrus compar'd in verse 4 and 5. 'Tis true in Him, as in many others of the human race, there was a strange mixture of contrary dispositions. Ezra's first chap. gives a bright display of his clemency in restoring the distress'd captive Jews to their native country and privileges : but his behaviour in battle was that of a savage Bear, to which verse 5, compares him. Therefore when this hero had the mortification of being conquer'd and captur'd by a woman, viz. Queen Tomyris, she order'd his head to be struck off and thrown into a vessel fill'd with blood ; and then utter'd these emphatic words " Now Cyrus take thy fill of blood which thou hast insatiably thirsted after." See Justinus's history. 'Tis true this account of the death of Cyrus differs from that given by Xenophon ; but the former better coincides with this chap.

3. Does the brute reign and sometimes rage in persons of the highest rank and repute (as the hieroglyphic's of this chap. amply testify) then it may certainly reign among people in lower life. It therefore concerns us all to scrutinize our own hearts in a matter of such high importance. An impartial search into our own breasts may perhaps discover a den of beasts as monstrous as any four legg'd brutes whatever ; but far more hellish and destructive ; I mean brutal lusts and passions, which, when they reign either in away of pride, passion, lust, or revenge, do make dreadful work in the soul and surrounding world. In short, these beasts will either destroy us, or we must destroy them. And let it not content us to get these indwelling beasts chain'd by restraining grace, but ourselves chang'd by renewing grace. And for our greater encouragement let us consider what is said in the 12th verse of this chap. namely, "*that these beasts had their dominion taken*

*taken away.*" What reviving tidings are these, not indeed to lazy but laborious warfaring Christians who are constantly imploy'd in combating the brutal fleshly part within; seeing victory is here insur'd to them! Besides, is there not an express promise that sin shall not have dominion over those who are not under the law but under grace Rom. vi. 14.

4. From the same 12th verse, we learn that tho' inbred corruptions, those bosom-brutes, do not reign, yet they reside in gracious souls even after conversion. Altho' "the dominion of these beasts is here said to be taken away"; 'tis immediately added "that their lives were prolong'd for a season." Now this is wisely permitted by God, 1st. To make a greater difference between the imperfect-state of Believers on earth, and their perfect state in heaven. 2dly. To prompt burden'd Saints to pant more ardently for a release from these bodies of sin and death in order to be conducted to the Spirits of just men made perfect—Again, those inbred corruptions are permitted to harass gracious souls during life with an intent to keep them more humble and vigilant, and to cut out more work for faith, patience and prayer. For a similar cause did the Lord permit the Canaanites to dwell in the land of promise even after his Israel had taken possession of it—"I will not put out the enemy all at once; but by little and little, said God, in order to become pricking thorns (i. e. quickening spurs) in thy sides" Num. xxxiii.

5. What a dark and dismal picture has the beginning and sequel of this chap. set before us! We have seen blasphemy opening its mouth shockingly wide: we have seen the horns of tyranny and persecution pushing down every thing sacred that stood in their way: we have seen truth and justice, law and liberty with their noble Patrons trampled under foot. But let all the Friends of Zion look forward; and they will discover a brighter scene near the end of the chap. which joyfully informs us "that the Kingdom and Dominion shall at last be given to the Saints of the Most High, and they shall possess it" verse 22, 27. What reviving words are these! Do they not plainly imply that how much soever the Saints are at present harass'd and sometimes overpower'd by foes within and foes around, they shall at last obtain the



the dominion over them all:—Where? Certainly in the grave, and in heaven at farthest. There the voice of the oppressor is heard no more: there sins and temptations are totally routed, yea eradicated, and will never more draw sighs from their bosoms, or tears from their eyes; as they have frequently done during their present state of conflict. These weather-beaten passengers must assuredly reach heaven after they have work'd their way thro' mists and clouds, thro' doubts and fears, and thro' Legions of dangers and devils. Then glorified Saints, in token of their warfare being ended, must have palms of victory put into their hands, and songs of triumph into their lips—“*Thus the Saints must have the dominion! They must also have the Kingdom,*” adds the celestial Messenger; a Kingdom contrived by infinite wisdom; decreed by infinite grace; purchas'd by infinite merit; and prepar'd by infinite power; a Kingdom which cannot be invaded by warring foes, nor shaken by civil discord; in a word, a Kingdom which, as v. 18. strongly expresseth it, *the Saints of the most High shall possess forever, even forever and ever.* Observe 'tis secured to them by *three forevers.*

6 How strange a resemblance do we find between many things in this chapter, and as many in the book of Revelations! Does Daniel in v. 3d. and 4th. speak of monstrous beasts rising out of the sea; one in the form of a lion, another in the similitude of a bear, and a third resembling a leopard. And do we not find a similar description in Rev. xiii. 1, 2. The beast, said St. John, which I saw rise out of the sea was like a leopard; his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. Again in v. 9th and 10th, of the present chapter, Judgment day is describ'd in nearly the same terms as in Rev. xx. 11, 12. And the *time, times, and dividing* (i. e. halving of time) in v. 25 of this vii chap. is the same with (*time, times, and half a time*) in Rev. xii. 14; for both refer to the precise time in which the destructive beast must reign. Lastly the Saints final victory over the beast and other persecuting enemies is celebrated Rev. xviii. and xx. in a like triumphant strain that we find it by Daniel in v. 18, 22, and 27.—But why did St. John thus nearly copy after Daniel? Shall we charge him with plagiarism? No; a more ge-

as well as juster cause may be affig'd; namely, that as Daniel for his consolation had perus'd and contemplated Jeremiah's prophecies (see Dan. ix. 1.) so when St. John was an exile in the isle Patmos, Rev. i. 9. 'tis highly probable he had as often perus'd and ponder'd Daniel's prophecies for his own instruction and solace; especially this viii. chap. which so particularly describes the beast under which John then suffer'd viz. Pagan Rome; and the glorious victory which the Saints; would at last obtain over it: yea so intently did his thoughts fix on these objects as to slide insensibly into much of Daniel's matter, and into many of his expressions.

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## C H A P. VIII.

*The destruction of the Medean Persian and Grecian Empires farther represented by other Hyeroglyphic emblems; and succeeded by a royal tyrant and persecutor of God's Church.*

Ver. 1 **I**N the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar I Daniel saw a vision by the river Ulai near Shushan the palace in the province of Elam, &c.

Here a graveling objection meets us at our first entrance on this chap. viz. How could Daniel be indulg'd with this Vision at a palace in Persia (for such Shushan was) and that too during the third year of Belshazzar's reign; because it doth not appear he ever left Babylon during that King's reign? 'Tis answer'd Daniel we may suppose was not personally in Shushan at this time; but only raptur'd thither in spirit in a visionary dream; like Ezekiel who was often brought that way to Jerusalem while he continued locally a captive in Babylonia Ezek. viii. 3. "The Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me to Jerusalem in the Visions of God." Observe, he was brought  
thithe

thither not in body but in spirit and a visionary dream, in which, says he, in the next verse, " I saw and behold there stood before the river a ram which had two horns ; and the two horns were high ; but one was higher than the other ; and the higher came up last." This Ram with two horns is expressly said by the Angel Gabriel in a following verse to represent the two Kings 3 of Media and Persia namely Darius the uncle and Cyrus his nephew. The lesser horn represented King Darius, because his kingdom was smaller than the kingdom of Persia, which, tho' of a later standing, did soon overgrow Media, therefore is here call'd the great horn. I might add, that Persia in this verse is fitly emblemized by a Ram, because a Ram was the Persian royal ensign or coat of arms, as travelers into that country inform us ; yea, some historians affirm that the ancient Kings of Persia wore crowns in the form of ram heads.—Having thus considered Daniel's prophetic vision of the Ram with two horns, we are next informed how this Ram acted: " I saw the Ram pushing Eastward and Northward and Southward," said Daniel. These 4 three quarters of the earth towards which the Ram pushed its antagonist, do by the united suffrage of Expositors, denote those three quarters of the world towards which King Darius and Cyrus directed their marches, and pushed their conquests ; namely toward Babylon, which lay West ; toward Armenia which stood North ; and towards Arabia Egypt and Etheopia, which were situated Southward ; all which Kingdoms Darius in part, but Cyrus much more, made conquests of.—The motions and progress of this double-horned Ram having now been set forth, his great power and prevalency is thus described in the latter part of this verse, " no beast could stand before him ; neither was there any that could deliver out of his hands ;" i. e. none of the neighbouring kingdoms were able to contend with Persian Cyrus, but all fell under his dominion ; by which means " He became great," adds Daniel ; great indeed ; for besides his own Kingdom he soon inherited his uncle's, which was so large as to need one hundred and twenty Princes, besides himself, to govern it (Dan. vi. 1.) But how fluctuating and unstable is every Kingdom below heaven ! That victorious and seemingly matchless Ram which emblamized the King and Kingdom of Persia met with his

B 2

match,



match, yea with an over match ; for as I was considering, (i. e. poring upon the Ram) saith Daniel, behold an He goat came from the West, on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes, and he came against the Ram." This verse is thus clearly explained by the Angel Gabriel in the 21st verse, " The rough Goat, said he, is the King or Kingdom of Grecia, and the great horn between his eyes is the first King." By the first King of Greece we are to understand Alexander the Great, as both civil and ecclesiastical history unanimously declare, \* And verily, with great propriety may the Grecian empire be figured by a Goat: for about two hundred years before Daniel's time, the Grecians were denominated *Ægedæ* or the Goat's People, on account of a superstitious regard paid by their Ancestors to an herd of goats at their first settlement in that country; † Besides, the motions and feats of this He-goat did exactly emblemize those of this Grecian Monarch, as This verse saith, " This He-goat came from

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\* 1 Macc. chap. I. verse 1. expressly asserts this. *Permit me here briefly to recite a well attested memorable passage referring to this Hero. In a night dream Alexander saw a venerable person in Priestly vestments, who told Him, that if He would march his army against Asia He might conquer it. Sometime after this the Rulers of Jerusalem offending Him He marched an hostile army against their city. The High priest Jaddæus fearing the consequences, went to meet Him unarmed at the head of the Priests, all dress'd in Priestly garments, the other citizens following in white. Alexander espying the high Priest coming towards Him, was so struck with the perfect resemblance he every way bore to the person He had seen in his dream, bowed to Him and embraced Him instead of spruning at Him; and then related to Him his dream. After this, the High priest conducted him to Jerusalem and the temple, where He shew'd Him this chap. in Daniel, which foretold that the first King of Greece (meaning Alexander) would conquer the King of Persia; which prediction greatly animated Him in that enterprize. — See Josephus's Hist. of the Jews.*

† See the late Bishop Newton's *Dissertation on the Prophecies*,

from the West. " So did Alexander the first King of Greece ; for his Kingdom lay on the West side of Persia. Again, this He-goat is said to be so swift, that in running towards his prey, " He did not touch the earth, with his feet." In like manner the marches of Alexander were so swift, and his conquests so rapid, that He might in some sort be said to fly over the ground without touching it. As Dean Prideaux strongly expresses it—" He flew with victory swifter than others can travel ; his cavalry pursuing his enemies whole days and nights together : so that He often fell upon them before they were aware of his being near, and conquer'd them before they could be in a posture to resist Him— Again, 'tis here said that " this He-goat came on the face of the whole earth." This emphatically represented the wide spreading conquests of Alexander who (I do not say march'd but) flew from Kingdom to Kingdom till He had conquer'd almost the whole known world in a very few years as the former book of Maccabees asserts Chap. I. 3.—Having thus view'd some of the motions and feats of this hieroglyphic He-goat, let us next consider his attack upon the Ram. 'Tis said, " He came to the Ram that had two horns which I had seen standing before the river (*Ulai*) and ran upon Him in the fury of his power, &c. and smote the Ram and brake His two horns," &c. This represents 6 the victory obtain'd by Alexander over Darius who possess'd two 7 Kingdoms, emblemized here by two horns. " Therefore the He-goat waxed very great," &c. So He did ; hence in all after ages, he has been call'd Alexander the Great. But observe how 8 unstable and transitory all human greatness is " When the He-goat was strong, adds Daniel, His great horn was broken." What a mournful but just emblem was this of human frailty and mutability seeing Alexander died at the age of 36, when both He and His Kingdom were in their full strength and grandeur. The great horn was then broken : and what follow'd ? Why adds the latter part of this verse " In the place of one great horn four notable ones sprouted up, which pointed towards the four winds" i. e. the four quarters of the world. How exactly was this fulfil'd when upon Alexander's decease, his four chief Generals, viz. Seleucus, Cassander, Lyfimmachus, and Ptolemy quarter'd his immense Empire among themselves ; tho' he had two sons of his

his own. So true is this that all history confirms it: The 22d  
verse of this chap. does so too where Gabriel informs Daniel that  
22 the four horns represented four Kingdoms—"To proceed; And  
out of one of the four horns a little horn came forth, which wax-  
ed exceeding great towards the South, and East, and towards  
the pleasant Land" (viz. Canaan), which is expressly stil'd the  
pleasant Land Ps. cvi. 24. and Jer. III. 19. By the little horn  
23 which sprouted from one of the four great horns we are (as the  
24 same Angel interpreteth it) to understand a very powerful, fierce  
and politick King, who would daringly insult both heaven and  
earth; yea the God of heaven and his temple-worship and wor-  
10 shipers in the manner thus describ'd "And the horn i. e. the  
King emblemized by that horn, waxed great even to the host" of  
heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to  
11 the ground, and stamped upon them; yea he magnified himself  
even to the Prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was  
12 taken away, and the sanctuary was cast down, and truth also was  
cast down"—This dismal enigmatic description looked with so  
dark an aspect towards Daniel's native country, and way of wor-  
15 ship, that he was very anxious to know the meaning of it. But  
my anxiety, says he, was soon remov'd—"When I Daniel had  
seen the vision and sought for the meaning, behold the appearance  
of a man stood before me; and I heard a man's voice between  
16 the banks of Ulai, which called, saying, Gabriel make this man  
to understand the Vision." That personage who now stood be-  
fore Daniel in an human form with an human voice, and com-  
manding Gabriel to be Daniel's interpreter, I take to be the  
same who thus spake in Rev. xxii. 16. I Jesus have sent mine  
13 Angel to do so and so. In the next verse of the present chap.  
this same person is in the hebrew and margin of our Bibles call'd  
the Numberer of Secrets, or Wonderful Numberer; as in Isa.  
ix. 6. He is call'd "Wonderful Counsellor" O what strange  
discoveries do we find of Messiah-Christ in almost every chap. of  
this Book. But to return; "Gabriel make Daniel understand  
this vision, said the person in an human form." Accordingly he  
does it by giving him such a description of the King represented  
by the little horn as exactly agrees with Antiochus Epiphanes;  
For first, did the person refer'd to set himself against the pleasant  
land



land even Canaan, and against the Jews, who are call'd the holy 24  
 people, and by St. Peter an holy nation; did he also destroy that  
 mighty and holy people, as the same verse asserts? So did Antio-  
 chus when he invaded Judea, and slew and led captive 80,000  
 Jews. Again, did this little horn fight against the Host of hea-  
 ven, and cast down some of the stars to the ground, and stamp 10  
 upon them! So did Antiochus destroy or set aside the Ministers of  
 God's sanctuary, who may be call'd stars (as they are in Revel.  
 II. 1.) Furthermore, 'tis foretold that this King thro' his po-  
 licy would cause craft to prosper, and by professions of peace  
 would destroy many: now the historical book of Maccabees as-  
 serts that to have been actually done by Antiochus several years af-  
 ter this. I. Mac. I. 29, 30. He came to Jerusalem, saith that  
 historian, with a great multitude, and spake peaceable words to  
 them; but all was deceit; for when they had given credit to him,  
 he fell suddenly upon the city Jerusalem and smote much people  
 with a sore destruction. Once more: this little Horn, or rather 11  
 the person typified by it is said to take away the daily sacrifice, and  
 by that means destroy the sanctuary i. e. the sanctuary worship: 12  
 that he would also cast truth down to the ground; yea "that he  
 would stand up against the Prince of Princes": viz. against God  
 and his cause. Now all these strange things were afterwards done  
 by that persecuting tyrant. The Book of Maccabees informs us  
 that he set up the image of Jupiter (an heathen Deity) in the  
 temple, order'd God's altars to be demolished; the daily sacrifices 25  
 to cease; and the Divine law, that word of truth, to be destroyed;  
 and the prince of the host (i. e. the high Priest) to be set aside.\*  
 Is it ask'd, what was the fate of this monster of wickedness?  
 Gabriel answers "He shall be broken without hands," i. e. with- 25  
 out human hands. Great a scourge as he had been to mankind,  
 they must not be his executioners. But a Divine hand must and  
 actually was; for it smote him with a mortification in his bowels  
 which caus'd a most torturing pain and horrid stench, and induced  
 him to confess with his dying lips that a vindictive Divine hand  
 lay heavy on him† But when did it cut him off? The Angel an-  
 swers;

13 fivers ; After he had exercised his impieties and cruelties against  
 14 the Jews 2300 days i. e. about six years and three months, after  
 which the sanctuary would be cleansed i. e. freed from idols\* To  
 conclude : those dark scenes of national calamities which Da-  
 niel's vision in this chap. sets before him, touched his tender spi-  
 27 rit so much that (as himself declar'd) " he was astonish'd, yea  
 fainted and was sick many days ; tho' he afterwards arose and did  
 the King's business." Observe with what a noble patriotic spirit  
 this great and good man was inspired, who tho' he had been torn  
 from the land of his nativity in early youth and had lived many  
 years in a foreign kingdom, even in the finest city and grandest  
 palace on earth probably, where the greatest affluence of earthly  
 delights abounded ; yet none of these allurements could make  
 him forget his native home, nor extinguish his sympathy for it.

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

1. From the 10, 11, and 12 verses, I infer that when sin hath  
 made a nation ripe for ruin, and the Divine sentence is already  
 gone forth against it, then no places of worship, tho' ever so sa-  
 cred, no sacrifices tho' ever so often repeated nor any profession,  
 tho' ever so specious, can fence off Divine Judgments. Thus  
 was it with Judea and Jerusalem. Tho' sacrifices were offer'd  
 every morning and evening in their temple ; and tho' the offici-  
 ating priests were a numerous host verse 10, yet neither they nor  
 their costly sacrifices could bribe or fence off Divine vengeance at  
 this time. Rather than his professing, but revolting Israel should  
 escape a chastisement God here takes up the most (awkward  
 and) crooked rod He can lay His hands on with which to scourge  
 them ; namely the vile Antiochus. Let no priviledged Nation  
 therefore presume upon victory and safety merely because their  
 contending enemies are more profligate than they. Be it known,  
 The best priviledged professors will, when their privileges are mis-  
 improv'd, lye more open to Divine Judgments than nonprofessing  
 Pagans, Amos III. 2.

2. From

2. From the 12th verse we learn, that this maxim will not always hold good, namely "Truth will still be protected by the God of truth:" No: if Truth be not prized and guarded by us (as well as by that God who first sent it to us) He may justly permit both us and it to sink in one common shipwreck. The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem; with the Priests of the temple had long enjoyed the Divine oracles. The Urim of light and truth had for several ages illuminated their worshipping assemblies; whilst the heathen nations around were envelop'd in the darkness of error. But, alas when the priests who should have propagated truth, did propagate error, and the contagion spre'd thro' their people, then a plundering idolatrous souldiery were justly permitted to trample upon and destroy that sacred Book whose Divine truths themselves had sleighted.

3. From these words of Daniel—"When Gabriel came near where I stood, I was greatly afraid, and fell upon my face, we may infer what weak creatures the best men are in their present frail earthly state; the sight and approach even of a good Angel so terrified this great and good prophet that he fell to the ground, as if struck by a thunderbolt. Alas, how unfit are we, while clothed in flesh, to associate and converse with unbod'y'd spirits! But why was Daniel more affrighted with the sight of a good Angel than with entering into the den of lions. Did not He, yea do not all God's people cheerfully hope to associate forever with an innumerable company of Angels in heaven; but alas the widely different frames a child of God is in at different times are quite unaccountable. Seen things make a far stronger impresson on the mind than objects out of sight! God's people know to their comfort "that Angels are ministering Spirits, sent forth to minister unto them Heb. 1. and that they encamp around those who fear the Lord" Ps. xxxiv; yet how did one of these friendly life guards terrify this prophet. But why are not mortals more affrighted with their vile sinful selves, than with loving Angels, but because *sense* and *sensuality* shamefully triumph over faith at times.

4ly. From that amazement and confusion into which a Prophet was thrown at the approach and presence of an Angel, we



learn how unfit those celestial Beings are to be stated preachers to earth-born mortals. Had it been a sudden, unexpected sight which Daniel got of this Angel, without knowing whether He was coming to Him as an executioner of wrath, or as a messenger of mercy his fright would have been excusable; but He actually heard the SON OF MAN say "Gabriel make this man understand the Vision"—verse 16. In consequence of this, the Angel drew near him as a friendly guide and instructor; yet Daniel almost lost his senses. Alas! what miserably blind creatures are we! how ready to run away from our own safety! to be affraid of our comforts! and to mistake our best friends! However, this instructs us not merely to acquiesce in, but to admire the wisdom of God in chusing earth-born mortals in a general way to deliver heavenly messages to us. 'Tis certainly most eligible that the Gospel treasure should be convey'd to us in earthen vessels, as the Apostle speaks, who may say to their hearers what Elihu did to Job—"Behold I am according to thy wish in God's stead; I also am form'd out of the clay; behold my terror shall not make thee affraid" Job xxxiii.

5ly. Did neither the Visions nor Revelations with which Daniel was now favour'd, prevent a return to his proper calling? verse 27. this shews that those whom God hath most dignified with visits from heaven must not deem themselves totally exempt from work on earth.\* "Tho' I Daniel fainted and was sick certain days (on account of the vision) I afterward arose and did the King's business verse 27. Those gracious Divine visits with which we are indulg'd under a sermon, at the throne of grace, or at the Lord's table, are not design'd to take off our hands from worldly business, but only our hearts from sinking too deep into earthly cares and pleasures.

Lastly, to what multitudes besides the unwary Jews in this chapter, has this smooth political engine of Antiochus been fatal—"By peace he shall destroy many" verse 25. Here I refer not merely to those political national bodies, which by very  
long

long intervals of peace have been emasculated, enervated and soften'd into luxury, indolence, sensuality and carnal security; and at last sunk into ruin. For how many souls as well as political societies hath peace destroy'd? When Ministers are either too timid that they dare not, or so unfaithful that they will not warn sinners of their danger; but preach smooth things; and (as the Prophet expresseth it) place pillows for their hearers consciences to sleep upon; also when they encourage them to hope that a mere external reformation will save them without an internal renovation; and that people need not look inwardly for marks of saving grace; but only outwardly to Christ; all this is a peace which destroys multitudes; however in cases of this sort the blood of souls will be requir'd at the hands of unfaithful shepherds Ezek. III. 18. Again, a peace grounded upon a benumbed conscience destroys many. When sinners carry quiet consciences in their bosoms, the danger is sometimes greater than when their consciences thunder hell and damnation against them. How frequently doth a long course of sin or a dull and formal round of devotions make conscience resemble a traveller's callous or seggy feet, viz. hard and feeble. Lastly a peace proclaim'd by a self deceiving heart destroys vast numbers. "The heart, saith Jeremiah, is deceitful above all things." How many false pleas doth it use whereby to lay conscience asleep? In how many guileful foldings doth it wrap itself with a view to cheat both itself and others too. The false colours it hangs out for that purpose are almost numberless; such as a counterfeit profession in the Church of God, and a counterfeit behaviour in the world of mankind.

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## C H A P. IX. PART I.

### *Daniel's Fast-day Prayer.*

**A**LTHO' Daniel had been honourably employ'd in the service of Ver, three great Kings, and was at this time set over 120 Princes of the realm, and resided in a King's palace, (as the last chapter declares) yet in this next we find him knocking at God's door in the humiliating condition of a supplicating beggar; and in the 3

fordid dress of sackcloth overspre'd with ashes. " I set my face, said Daniel, towards the Lord God, to seek by prayer and supplications with fasting, sackcloth and ashes"—But why had he now chang'd his robes of state into such a squalid garb as this? Was he suddenly fallen from his high station into disgrace and beggary? or was he a second time threaten'd with a den of lions? No; 'twas not any personal disgrace or distress which selfishly prompted him to this; but a generous and public spirited concern for Jerusalem that city of God, which had lain in ruins near 70 years. However as it is reasonable to suppose that during so long an interval many prayers had been put up for the restoration of Jerusalem, all which had miscarried, what reason had Daniel to hope for better success in such an errand than others before him had met with? He answers that Jeremiah's Book of prophecies, which he had perused and studied, gave him great encouragement at this time, " In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, I Daniel understood by books or writings the number of years whereof the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet that " He would accomplish 70 years in the desolations of Jerusalem." And verily in several chapters doth Jeremiah foretell the Babylonish captivity before it began; and in some of them, the exact duration of it before it ended Jer. xxv. 12. and in chapter xxix. 10. we find these remarkable words " Thus saith the Lord; after seventy years are accomplish'd at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good work towards you in causing you to return to this place; i. e. to Jerusalem where I reside. Now Daniel, by computing his own age, might know how many years of this captivity were already elapsed; consequently when the Jews' release was to take place; which must be nigh at hand, because his royal master Darius had already begun to favour it; yea and the like had been done by his nephew Cyrus even before He surrender'd Babylon to his uncle Darius Ezra i. 1. Daniel having all these assurances given him that the Babylonish captivity was near an end, what does he thereupon? Does he sit down indolent and careless; saying, Jeremiah's predictions and God's promises must be fulfill'd whether I pray for and endeavour their accomplishment or not? No, in the subsequent prayer he pleads as importunately for the event as if God had made no antecedent promise



promise concerning it. And indeed, in the very same chapter that the Jews release from captivity was foretold, their seeking it by prayer is commanded Jer. xxix. 12. Hence we learn that the certain foreknowledge of an event should not set aside the use of means, but rather excite and encourage us to use them more cheerfully and vigo'rously. Neither prophecies nor promises on God's part must set aside prayer on ours. From the same example we infer that no worldly greatness or insight into spiritual things should set aside reading the sacred Scriptures; for did not Daniel, that great politician and prime Minister to three mighty Kings, find time and an inclination to read and ponder the sacred scriptures; Yea the predictions of a Prophet who was far his inferior? did he not also redeem time for fasting and prayer. His fast-day prayer recorded in this chapter deserves to be a pattern to all who conduct social prayer; for its language is plain, but not coarse; sublime, but not bombast. To increase the solemnity of this prayer the venerable name of God is no fewer than twenty times invoc'd; yet there's nothing in it of a nauseating tautology. The sentences are full but concise; while a spirit of fervent devotion apparently pervades and animates the whole. I will add; this prayer is so perspicuous as not to need any explanation either by notes or paraphrase: I shall therefore set it down in the Prophet's own words.—O Lord the great and dre'dful God, keeping covenant-mercy to them that love Him, and to them that keep his 4 commandments. We have sinned and have committed iniquity; 5 and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments. Neither have we hearken'd unto thy servants the 6 Prophets, who spake in thy name to our Kings, our Princes; and our Fathers, and to all the people of the Land. O Lord right- 7 teousness belongeth to thee, but to us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and unto all Israel, that are near, and far off, thro' all the countries whither thou hast driven them; because we have sinned 8 against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgive- 9 nesses, tho' we have rebelled against Him. Neither have we 10 obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws which He set before us by his servants the prophets, &c. Therefore the curse that is written in the law of Moses is poured upon us. And

He

12 He hath confirm'd his words which He spake against us, and  
 against our judges that judg'd us, by bringing upon us a great  
 evil; for under the whole heaven hath not been done, as hath  
 13 been done upon Jerusalem. *But tho' all this evil is come upon*  
 us; yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God, that  
 14 we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.  
 Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it  
 upon us; for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works  
 15 which he doeth, &c. And now O Lord our God, that hast  
 brought thy people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand;  
 and hast gotten thee renown as at this day; we have sinned, we  
 16 have done wickedly. O Lord, according to all thy righteousness  
 I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turn'd away from  
 thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and  
 for the iniquities of our Fathers Jerusalem and thy people are be-  
 17 come a reproach to all that are about us. Now therefore, O our  
 God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications; and  
 cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the  
 18 Lord's sake. O my God incline thine ear and hear; open thine  
 eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by  
 thy name for we do not present our supplications before thee for our  
 19 righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord hear; O Lord  
 forgive; O Lord h'arken, and do; defer not for thine own sake,  
 O my God; for thy city and thy people are call'd by thy name."

### *Remarks and Inferences,*

1. From the pattern set before us in Daniel's prayer, we may  
 infer, that the most reverential thoughts of God, and the most  
 abasing sense of ourselves should always accompany us to the  
 throne of grace. And be it known; the more exalted concep-  
 tions we have of God and his infinite perfections, the more abas-  
 ing and humble thoughts shall we have of our sinful selves; the  
 former being the brightest mirror for discovering spots in the latter.  
 Hence when Daniel entertain'd the most sublime apprehensions  
 of his Maker he retain'd the most humiliating sense of his own  
 sinful unworthiness, notwithstanding his being a first-rate Saint  
 and Prophet, yea an intentional martyr: therefore we find him in

verse 18th not pleading merit, but frankly confessing demerit—"O my God we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercys." And indeed when the very best of us prostrate ourselves before the Divine foot-stool, God's mercy and Christs' merits should be our chief pleas.

2. How fit is it that lapsed creatures who find so much time for sinning should find proportionable time for confessing it before that God against whom it is committed. In this one prayer Daniel confesseth his sins as many times as there are verses in the prayer. And let it not suffice to say in general terms "Lord we are sinners!" but let us expediate upon the aggravating circumstances of our transgressions; for tho' this will not add any thing to the knowledge of God, it will greatly add to our own humiliation and devotion, and that of fellow-worshippers. Besides without full confession there's no right contrition; and without contrition, no remission.

3. How full is Daniel's prayer of pathetic importunate pleadings! "O Lord, said he, according to all thy righteousness I beseech thee let thine anger be turned away. O God hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications for the Lord's sake; and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate." And near the end of his prayer, his fervour and importunity, instead of flattening and cooling, gathers more and more fervour and importunity. What a cluster of fervent pleadings is there in the two last verses of his prayer—"O my God incline thine ear and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations. O Lord hear; O Lord forgive; O Lord h'arken and do; defer not for thine own sake O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name"—Such pleadings with God as these, grounded on his endearing names, attributes, promises, and our own experiences, are in my apprehension the most feeling and affecting parts of a prayer. 'Tis imitating that great Patriarch in Hos. xii. 3, 4, who by his strength had power with God, yea he had power over the Angel of the covenants: He found Him in Bethel; there he wept and made supplication to him and prevailed.

4. What



4. What a shining pattern of mildness and benevolence doth Daniel's humiliation-prayer hold forth for our imitation. 'Tho' the calamities brought on his native country and countrymen by the plundering and tyrannizing Babylonians gave rise to his prayer, he discover'd not the least tincture of a malicious revengeful spirit. He did not charge the Babylonians with being the prime authors of all these national calamities, nor call them cruel, treacherous, and every thing that's bad ; as some are apt to do in similar cases. He did not load them with such dire curses and imprecations as his bitter countrymen *breathed forth* in Ps. cxxvii. " O daughter of Babylon, *happy shall he* be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones *against* the stones." No, Daniel, being a first-rate Saint, he as much excell'd his countrymen in a mild, merciful and benevolent spirit as he did in an holy one ; therefore he denounced not one imprecation against the instruments of these national calamities, but against his own and countrymen's sins which procured them—" For our sins and the iniquities of our Father's, said he, is all this befallen us"—Let Great Britain, in all her national wars and on all her national fast-days, imitate this noble pattern.

5. In this same Prayer another bright exemplar riseth up before our eyes, highly deserving our imitation, namely a public patriotic spirit. Not so much as one petition did this catholic prophet put up for himself, or for his own family, but for his native country and countrymen. Self ease and self interest were wholly set aside ; and all his prayer fasting, and sackcloth-dress, was for the deliverance of his enslaved people. Thus he became an illustrious type of the Lord Jesus who since his triumphant ascension to heaven where he sits enthroned in glory, is still concern'd for his exiled children here below, and ever lives to make intercession for them. O Daniel, why didst thou appear in this ruful garb at this time ? why didst thou fast, and send us so many plaintive cries to heaven ? Didst thou want any thing this world could do for thee ? Nothing, would the good man have answer'd ; a royal palace is my habitation ; royal provision my fare ; and I rank above princes. But oh my country and my countrymen ! these lye so near my heart, that I cannot be easy even in a palace while

they continue in a state of captivity. What a catholic and benevolent spirit was this ! How far was Daniel from imitating that thoughtless tribe “ who chaunted to the sound of the viol, who drank wine in bowls, and anointed themselves with the most costly ointments, but were not griev’d for the afflictions of Joseph” Amos vi. But did Daniel confine all his care and prayer to the temporal welfare of his country, and not to its religious interests ! No ; O Lord said he, I beseech thee turn away thine anger from thine holy mountain on which thy temple stands : For the Lord’s sake cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary which is desolate *verse 16, 17.* And indeed if when God shines upon his sanctuary, He at the same time shines into the hearts of those who worship in it, ’tis well with them whatever cloud of adversity hangs over them.

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## C H A P. IX. PART II.

*The remarkable speedy answer returned to Daniel’s Fast-day Prayer.*

Ist. **I**N the promised deliverance of the captive Jews from their bondage state by King Cyrus.

Illy. In the promised deliverance of Mankind from a greater slavery by a greater Prince, viz. the Anointed Messiah.

Having consider’d Daniel’s Fast-day Prayer recorded in the former part of this chapter ; the remarkable and speedy answer to that prayer cometh next into consideration : I call it *remarkable*, because it was not given in the common way of favourable impressions made on the mind, or of bible promises apply’d to the heart ; but the Lord dispatched the Angel Gabriel with a winged speed from heaven to convey the answer to him. He is called the man Gabriel because at this time He assumed an human form. 21

But when did Gabriel deliver his message to Daniel? Even before he had ended his fast-day prayers. "While I was speaking and praying, said He, Gabriel was caus'd to fly swiftly, and He touched me about the time of the evening oblation" i. e. when the evening sacrifice was wont to be offer'd in the temple; then

23 He said "O Daniel, at the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth (*from God*) and I am come to shew it thee: for thou art greatly beloved" And so he was by that God whom he had so cordially loved and faithfully served; and for whose worship and worshipping people he had so deep a concern as to keep a solemn Fast, and put up the most fervent supplications for them. After Gabriel had prefac'd his message He deliver'd it to Daniel charging him to consider it attentively on account of

24 its important and mysterious contents—"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and upon thy holy city (*Jerusalem*) to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and the prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy" This and three of the next verses contain some of the most precious gospel truths; but like some kinds of stone-fruit they are inclosed in a very hard shell. In order to break it, let three things be attended unto. Ist. That the weeks mention'd in this singular prophecy are not common weeks consisting of seven days a piece, but prophetic weeks, in which each day stands for an year. These are called weeks of years in Lev. xxv. 8. A like calculation we find in the prophecy of Ezekiel who was Daniel's cotemporary; whose prophecy's Daniel had actually read, as himself declares at the beginning of this chapter. See Ezek. iv. 6. I have appointed thee each day for an year, says God. Consequently 70 prophetic week's here amount to 70 times seven years, i. e. 490, which, according to the calculations of chronologists and learned Divines, is exactly the time taken up between the royal proclamation to build the city and temple of Jerusalem mention'd Neh. II. and that latter time when Messiah would finish the great mediatorial work specified in these verses—Consider IIldly. that those seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks, mention'd verse 25, and 26, and the one week specified in verse 27, make the same sum that the 70 weeks mentioned in



verse 24th do. IIIly. That these 70 weeks in verse 24th are divided into three parts in the three next verses, in order to shew how much of these 70 weeks, each of the three prognosticated events took up. I begin with verse 24, where the Angel informs Daniel that seventy prophetic weeks or seventy times seven years, amounting to 490, were to intervene from the time of Daniel's captive countrymen's return to Judea and the rebuilding of the holy city Jerusalem, unto the time that Messiah was to be set apart to his sacerdotal office, and afterwards cut off, &c. The most Holy is to be anointed, saith Gabriel. Here as well as in some other parts of Daniel's prophecy the Messiah is stiled the most holy; because He was indeed the most 'holy Person that ever appeared in human flesh. Concerning this most holy person, 'tis said that before He enter'd upon his sacerdotal office He was to be anointed as the levitical High-priest was, when set apart to his office. Indeed He had been anointed even before Gabriel utter'd this matter to Daniel, viz. in the more early Days of Isaiah, chapter lxi. 1. The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, said Messiah, because the Lord hath anointed me; but how? Not with material oil externally, but with the Holy Spirit internally; also abundantly; for 'tis said "God gave not the Holy Spirit by measure unto Him" Messiah being thus to be consecrated to the office of High-priest, we are in the same verse inform'd what offices this Gospel <sup>24</sup> High-priest was to execute. Ist, He was "to finish transgression," namely by atoning for it; whereby He took away the guilt and eternal punishment due to it so effectually as to say with his last dying breath, "It is finished" John xix. IId. He was "to make an end of sin"—i. e. to put an end to its dominion in his people in this life, and even to its existence at the end of life, IIIly. He was "to make reconciliation for iniquity."—This He actually did, and still continues to do. By his sin atoning sacrifice He reconciles God to sinners: and by his sanctifying spirit He reconciles sinners to God. 'Tis expressly said "We are reconciled to God by the death of his son Rom. v; also that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself 2 Cor. v. How? by subduing that enmity there is in the carnal mind to God and godliness—IVly. He was "to bring in everlasting righteousness"—This might be the gospel which is expressly term'd the ever-

lasting gospel, which our High-priest introduced in the room of the levitical dispensation. Or this everlasting righteousness may denote that evangelic righteousness which the Messiah's gospel published, and which the Holy Spirit applies to the heart and there seals it. The last office which Messiah, that most Holy anointed one, must execute, was—"sealing up the vision and the prophecy" By Messiah sealing up these visions and prophecies we must probably understand his putting an end in a great measure to the Old Testament way of imparting instructions to mankind by visions and prophecies; and his substituting a more full and certain gospel Revelation in their place. 'Tis well known that a seal is affixt to the end of writings, whether bonds, covenants, or indentures. But to proceed; "Know therefore and understand, adds 25 Gabriel, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven (*prophetic*) weeks and threescore and two, &c. By the going forth of a command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem we may, as a Divine rightly observes, understand the publication of a royal decree commanding these things to be done. The first decree was made in the first year of King Cyrus, who permitted the captive Jews in and about Babylon to return unto Jerusalem for the purpose of building the temple only Ez. i. 2, 3. But that work was so obstructed by envious neighbours during the remainder of this King's reign, that King Darius\* publish'd a II<sup>d</sup> Decree; by virtue of which the temple was finished in the sixth year of his reign Ezra. vi. 1, and 15. A III<sup>d</sup> Decree was issued out by King Artaxerxes for the building (not of the temple but) of the city wall Nehe. chap. II<sup>d</sup>. But to return: From the going forth of the command to build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince, &c. Messiah

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\* Many have ignorantly imagin'd that the Darius who put forth this 2<sup>d</sup> decree in favour of Jerusalem was he who immediately succeeded King Belshazzar in the throne of Babylon; and that 'tis the same Darius of whom mention is made by Ezra, Neh. Hag. Zach. But they were different persons. The former was a Mede, the latter a Persian Ez. iv. 5. The former was uncle, the latter son-in-law to Cyrus, See Bp. Patrick on v. 5.

Messiah is an hebrew name, and of the same signification with Christos in the Greek language. Therefore the septuagint, (a version which our Lord and his Apostles generally quoted) translate Messiah in this verse Christos i. e. Christ in English. Both words denote, Anointed. Christ has the name of Messiah in the New as well as Old Testament John i. 41, and iv. 25. In the next verse our Lord appropriates the name Messiah to Himself. 26 Observe the Angel Gabriel proclaim'd the birth of Messiah to the Old Testament church, as well as to the New Luke I. Observe again Daniel was indulged with this peculiar priviledge above all the Prophets, that he not only foretold things to come, as they did, but mark'd the precise time when those things should happen: So saith the Jewish historian Josephus. In this 25th and 26th verse, we are inform'd how many prophetic weeks would intervene before Messiah would come; namely sixty-two, and seven and one: during which time "Jerusalem's wall would be built in troublesome times," adds Gabriel; and troublesome times they indeed were, when the builders were so continually annoy'd by their envious hostile ne'bours, as to be constrain'd to work with one hand and to hold a weapon in the other Neh. iv. But to return "And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut 26 off, but not for himself" i. e. not for any supposed personal crime; but for the sins of others. Now observe what dire calamities befell the Jews for having a primary hand in murdering the innocent Messiah, that Lord of glory "The people i. e. the soldiers, of a Prince saith the same verse would come and destroy their city and sanctuary" (meaning the temple) This prince was Titus, the Roman Emperor's Son, who marching an army to the gates of Jerusalem, did after a long siege take and demolish it: and tho' He gave his army the strictest charge to spare that magnificent edifice the temple; yet, as if this prophecy in Daniel must be fulfilled, one of his soldiers, as tho' influenced by a Divine impulse or diabolick fury, prevail'd with a fellow soldier to carry him upon his shoulders; and having a flaming torch in his hand he set fire to the most beautiful part of the temple, which without this contrivance he could not have reach'd. Thus saith the Jewish Historian Josephus. In the mean-time, how strange is it that the destruction of the second temple should be foretold by an Angel  
even



27 even before it was built. I now proceed to the next verse " And He (meaning the Messiah) shall confirm the covenant (*viz. the covenant of grace or gospel dispensation*) with many for one week, that is one prophetic week, in which each day stands for an year. So that this prophetic week was about seven years : in the midst of which, being three years and an half, Messiah finish'd his Ministry and was cut off. In consequence of this He caus'd the sacrifice and the oblation to cease (verse 27.) i. e. from the time of Christ's death the efficacy and acceptableness of all levitical sacrifices and offerings ceased, or came to an end, being superseded by an infinite better sacrifice (of which the other were but types and shadows) viz. the sacrifice of himself; But the covenant or gospel dispensation, mention'd in the former part of the last quoted verse, was not confirm'd, i. e. not firmly establish'd, before the end of the foresaid prophetic week : but by whom was it confirm'd? why, by the descent of the holy Spirit on the day of pentecost, and by the ministry of the Apostles.

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

1. What speedy and gracious answers are sometimes given to the prayer of faith, fervency and sincerity!—" While I was speaking and praying, and confessing sin, said Daniel, Gabriel was dispatched from heaven with a winged speed to let me know that my petition was granted as soon as I began my prayer"— This plainly demonstrates that neither the length nor excellency of Daniel's prayer gave it success; but rather the over-flowings of Divine goodness which was more forward in bestowing favours than this supplicant was in petitioning for them. So that on this occasion the free-grace promise was even literally accomplish'd Isa. lxxv. 24, while they are yet speaking I will hear (i. e. grant their requests;) not perhaps the individual thing prayed for, but something equivalent or better. Perhaps a mere worldly trouble was deprecated; or a temporal enjoyment petitioned for; Now, if, during that prayer, God imparted sufficient patience to bear that worldly trouble, or contentment to wait that temporal enjoyment; this was giving more than was pray'd for.

2dly. On

2dly. On what a great and important errand did Messiah descend from heaven to earth ! namely—" to finish transgression—to make an end of sin—to make reconciliation for iniquity—and to bring in everlasting righteousness" These are blessings which tend to make the world more rich and happy than all the wealth of both the Indies. Of all evils sin is the greatest : An evil which has infected and infested mankind almost from the beginning of creation ; a plague, under which they have suffer'd more than by all the serpentine brood than ever infested this earthly globe ; yea than all the corporeal maladies and miseries that mankind ever labour'd under. How welcome therefore shou'd that Divine Physician be who came to free the distemper'd world from this worst of maladies. But the mishap is ; no distemper'd patients are so insensible of their maladies, or so averse to the means of a cure, as they who labour under the deadly disease of sin. Earthly physicians of far less value, are diligently enquir'd after, and apply'd unto with importunity : This Divine Physician is slighted, rejected and fled from. Corporeal medicines, the most bitter and nauseous, are sought and purchased at any rate ; but these soul medicines can seldom by any intreaties be fasten'd on sinners, altho' offer'd to them without money and without price Isa. lv. I would have healed Israel, says God, but he would not be heal'd Hos. viii.—" But is no healing work going forward upon distemper'd souls, says a fore quoted Author ? Is this Divine Physician like those quacks who promise much, but perform little ? No ; millions there have been and still are, on whom this promise is made good " He shall finish transgression, make an end of sin and bring in everlasting righteousness." " Christ Jesus, saith one,\* hath so made an end of his people's sin that sin shall not make an end of them. They may indeed be sometimes condemn'd in the court of conscience, but not in the court of heaven. Sin may cause great distress of mind ; may bring disorders and even death on the body ; but oh death where is thy sting ? thanks be to God who giveth us the victory thro' Christ Jesus our Lord. It must indeed be confess'd that at present all sin is so far from coming to an end that it abounds almost without end, in every age, and in every inhabited part of this terrestrial globe. But a time is coming when

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\* See Mr. Winter's Sermon on v. 24.

its very being in the souls and bodies of Christ's People must cease forever. When?—Why, not merely at the end of the world; but at the end of every conscientious and laborious christian's life. Then this indwelling depravity, which at present injects its poison into every prayer and into every Divine ordinance, must be laid aside; and the spotless robes of righteousness and salvation be put on. Is not this consideration animating? Is it not transporting? For my part, I sincerely declare that the complete fulfilment of this promise in my soul—"Transgression shall be finished, and an end put to sin"—would more delight me than to have the promise of a crown sceptre and kingdom ensur'd to me; yea, far rather would I have an end put to my sins than to all the numerous maladies and infirmities of my body.

3ly. How exactly did the spirit of prophecy harmonize in those two evangetic prophets Isaiah and Daniel with respect to the quality of our Saviour's death. Both represent it a violent death; but not for any supposed sin of his own; yea both represent his death by the same phrase of being cut off. He was cut off, saith Daniel. He was cut off out of the land of the living, said Isaiah chap. liii. 8. He was cut off but not for himself said Daniel: for the transgressions of my people was He smitten, said Isaiah. In another place 'tis said "The Lord laid on Him the iniquities of us all." But have all therefore a saving interest in Him who died for the sins of others? No but they only who have been planted into the likeness of Christ's death by themselves being cut off too. Cut off from what?—'Tis answer'd; from all expectations of justification by their own works and by having their hearts and affections cut off from all reigning sin; also from all hopes of rest and happiness in creatures.—N. B. Much of what is said under the two last remarks is borrowed from the excellent Discourses of the Rev. R. Winter, on the four last verses of this chapter.





*Error and Impiety trampling upon and triumphing over Truth laid prostrate at their feet—being a Meditation on Chap. VII. 12, latter Part.*

**I**T cast down the Truth to the ground; and it practised and prosper'd.

What a spectacle lyes here! Can I not drop a single tear over it? But do I now espy *one* deplorable object only? No, but multitudes involv'd in that one. When Truth or veracity perishes from the earth, no safety or security can be found on the throne or at the foot-stool; no confidence in juries or witnesses; consequently no security in life itself, or any of its enjoyments: no trust or confidence at the Exchange, market or workshop; no mutual confidence between Pastor and People, Parent and Child, Husband and Spouse; Master and Servant. In a word, Truth and Fidelity being that great chain which links all political civil and ecclesiastical societies together; when this is broken and destroy'd all human society flies asunder; and either sinks into ruin or breaks into faction and confusion—But tho' this species of Truth be included, 'tis not principally intended in these words "It cast down Truth to the ground"—If any like Pilate ask "What is Truth" 'Tis answer'd; In the present passage it signifies the Bible, that Book of God which was taken out of Jerusalem's Temple by that persecuting tyrant Antiochus, and was trampled upon and burnt by his plundering soldiery; as the history of Maccabees largely shews. Then was Truth literally cast down to the ground. Piteous case indeed! But are there not other ways by which this sacred Book is cast down? Yes; 'tis certainly cast down when it is in a great measure cast aside, and scarce ever read between one Lord's day and another. Again, this precious Divine Book is cast down to the ground when professing Christians deal as ill by precious Bible Truths, as ignorant Pagans now did by Bible books and leaves. Certainly Truth may be cast down both by priests and people, even while their Bibles remain entire, without the loss of a single leaf or paragraph. 'Tis so when Divine Truths are daringly denied and mutilated; or craftily conceal'd,

misrepresented, and explain'd away. Truth is rejected when the God of Truth is misrepresented. I have been long convinced that misconceptions of the nature and office-characters of the triune God, viz. Father, Son, and Holy-Spirit are the prime source of all error in Christian Churches. Tho' error divides itself into a thousand rivulets all may be traced up to this one source. In the grand Economy of man's salvation some ascribe almost every thing to the Father, and scarce any thing to the Son; others, almost every thing to the Son, and but very little to the Father, while to a third sort, the Holy Spirit is all in all. Truth is certainly cast down when any reject or curtail the Office of the Divine Father as a Lord and Law giver, whose laws are eternally and unalterably binding upon the whole human race; and to whom prayer should be most *statedly* presented thro' the Son and by the holy Spirit. I say, *most statedly presented*: not invariably; because scripture exhibits some precedents of prayers addressed directly to the Son of God: but not nearly so many as to warrant our Moravian bre'thern to present almost all their praying addresses to the Lamb of God; tho' thro' what Divine Mediator we know not—Again, Truth is cast down when the office of the Divine Son is depreciated, as an High Priest making atonement for sin, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness; also as a surety engaging for and paying his people's debts; each of which supposeth guilt on man's part which himself cannot expiate. Lastly, Truth is cast down when those renovating and assisting influences of the Holy Spirit, which imply the depravity of human nature, are denied, yea perhaps ridicul'd. But as much has been already said on this former clause as is consistent with the brevity of a short Meditation “It cast down truth to the ground.” Let me turn my thoughts to the latter clause which informs me that they who cast down Truth “practis'd and prosper'd;” i. e. they prosper'd for a Season; as Antiochus and his plundering soldiery did when they trampled the Divine Law under their feet. But wherefore does a righteous God often permit Truth to be trampled down and triumph'd over?—First to try the integrity of others. When error, thro' the multitude of its votaries, grows fashionable; then for the patrons of Truth to adhere steadily unto it amidst so many seducing temptors and temptations, this

is glorious, this is praise worthy, because it discovers great integrity and stedfastness. In 1 Cor. xi. 19. The Apostle saith—  
 “ there must be heresies, that they who are approv’d may be made manifest—Again, nominal Church-members are Divinely permitted to tread down Truth for a season in a way of judgment for having willfully shut their eyes against the light of Truth Rom. I. 28. “ As they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind.” Willfull blindness in man is deservedly punish’d with judicial blindness by God—But blessed be the Father of lights who open’d my eyes to behold, admire, and love the wonderous things contain’d both in his law and gospel. That sacred Book has, I trust, often enlighten’d, quicken’d, guided, renew’d, and refresh’d my soul, not only when I first enter’d on my christian pilgrimage, but many times since. Therefore, let infidels imploy their pens and tongues ever so often against this Book of God ; let the wits of this age ever so much ridicule and expose its contents : Let Novelists who profess some veneration for this old Book grow ever so weary of its old Truths, labouring to substitute new ones in their room : Let self justiciars be ever so much cloy’d with its free-grace doctrines ; and let carnal hearts and antinomian spirits rise with ever so much enmity against its strict morality, it shall always be esteem’d by me the wisdom of God and the power of God. ’Tis my brightest light when the light of nature fails me: my surest guide thro’ all the thick mists, and curvating labyrinths of Providence ; my shield against assauling temptations ; my cordial whenever my spirit faints ; finally, my useful companion during life ; and my supporting staff when I walk thro’ the valley of the shadow of death.  
 Amen.



*The early wickedness of the world prompting the Ancient of days to a speedy process of eternal Judgment; being a Meditation on Chap. VII, 9, 10.*

**I** Beheld 'till the thrones were cast down; and the Ancient of Days did sit; whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him; thousand thousands minister'd unto Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; the judgment was set, and the books were open'd.

What a grand description have we here of the judgment-day! the grandest certainly of any in the whole bible: indeed fancy itself cannot paint one more magnificent, more Solemn, or more awful. The mere description of it is enough to strike my mind with the most profound awe; and to spread a chilling horror thro' my whole soul: how much more, when I myself must hereafter be an actual spectator of it; yea a party deeply concerned in it: for I and all mankind must meet this eternal Judge whose attire and procession are so strikingly delineated—The scene here drawn is so crowded, that in order to obtain a clear sight of each object I must take a separate view of it. Now the

1st. Grand object which presents itself is the leveling preparations made for the approach of the eternal Judge,

“The thrones were cast down said Daniel: when? Why, when the great Monarch of heaven was coming to judge the world. The casting down of these thrones implies that all earthly kingdoms must sooner or later be dissolved. And if the thrones must be cast down; so must those who sit upon them; also their kingly rule. What a grand figure do earthly thrones make in

this

this world ! What rivers of human blood have been spilt by rival Princes for them ! What vast fleets and armies have been drawn together ; and how many great battles have been fought to protect and secure them ! Yet sooner or later must all these eagerly contested thrones be cast down ; and those who sit upon them be laid in the dust. Death and doom's day will certainly be great levellers. Then rich masters and their poor servants ; then grand Monarchs and their meanest subjects must know no difference, except what religion and Divine grace have made. At the dissolution of the world the Monarch's royal throne and sceptre, and the beggar's wooden staff and stool will be blended together in one general ruin. Where then will be the vast empires of Russia, China and Turkey ? Where will be the throne and kingdom of the house of Bourbon ? Yez where the throne of our British Kings, tho' at present supported by three great nations, and many distant provinces ? all, all will pass away like a fleeting shadow. What a pity then is it that while earthly crowns and kingdoms are so eagerly catch'd at per fas et nefas, the celestial kingdom should be sought by me with such languid desires, and more languid ende'vours : a kingdom which costs no blood except the expiatory blood of the Son of God, and the blessed Martyrs of Jesus ; a kingdom where there are no wars except what are honourably waged against satan and sin ; a kingdom too which, when once possessed by Saints, shall be possessed by them forever. " The Saints of the most high, saith the 18th verse, shall take and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. "—In the mean time if such great and grand acquisitions as thrones are to be cast down ; thrones supported by royal revenues, and defended by fleets and armies, and life guards, then how sitting and perishing must inferior earthly enjoyments be ; and how unwise to place our hearts and hopes chiefly upon them. As the fashion of this world passeth away, we should so use as not to misuse it 1 Cor. vii. Having fix'd my attention a few minutes on the leveling preparations made for the procession of the eternal Judge (express'd by the " casting down of all earthly thrones" which stood in his way) I am:

II. To take a view of the eternal Judge for whom those preparations were made,

Now I observe, He is not describ'd by any of his usual names (such as God, Lord, or Jehovah) but by this emphatic name—"The Ancient of Days"—The thrones being cast down, "the Ancient of days did sit" said Daniel; namely on his celestial throne, or tribunal. With the greatest propriety may Jehovah be stiled, the Ancient of days, seeing He existed from eternity; whereas all other beings are creatures of time only. What an amazing being is God? Were I to carry my thoughts ever so far back to past ages, they could not possibly reach the beginning of the Divine existence: for indeed it had no beginning. What can measure that which is altogether without measure. But why is the supreme Judge here characteriz'd "the Ancient of Days"?—Certainly; to shew how completely qualified He was to execute the office of universal Judge here assign'd to Him. He who exists thro' all periods of time is best able to know and judge of those things which are transacted thro' every period of time. Short-lived earthly judges are often under a necessity of consulting the worm eaten records of past ages for enabling them to determine present causes. But no such lame helps will the Ancient of days need when He ascends his judgement seat—Thus I have taken a view of the supreme Judge, here characterized as—"the Ancient of Days"—The next wonderful object which offers itself to my contemplative thoughts on the present subject, and which comes next in the order of the words is

III. The peculiar dress in which the ancient of days enrob'd Himself when He was to act the part of universal Judge.

"I beheld the Ancient of days did sit in a garment white as snow says Daniel; and the hair of his head was like to pure wool"—As white is a well known emblem of purity and innocence, it well beseems celestial Beings whose natures are as free from the least moral taint as undipt wool is free from the dye: or as virgin snows are free from dirt while they are falling thro' the pure air. Hence white according to scripture account, was the livery in which Angels generally made their appearance among mortals; the garb too in which the King of heaven here appeared to Daniel:



niel: Besides white as already hinted, being an emblem of spotless innocence, was a fit robe to be worn by Him who was to judge the world in righteousness. Having thus view'd the magnificent appearance of this royal Judge—The next grand figure which attracts my attention, is

#### IV. The majestic throne or tribunal on which He sat.

“ His throne, adds Daniel in the next words, was like the fiery flame; and his wheels as burning fire”—This description is similar to that in Ps. l. 3. Our God will come; viz. to judgment. A fire shall devour before Him. The Apostle too speaks of the Lord coming from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, to judge the world 2 Thes. i. But the description given in the passage now before me is certainly more grand and awful than any on sacred record. For fire (the most formidable of all the elements) is here said to burst forth both before, behind, and underneath Jehovah's flying throne. Dr. Louth supposeth this throne was in the form of a triumphal chariot, all on a blaze, and whose wheels resembl'd burning fire. The fiery wheels which supported this flying throne or chariot were probably bright shining angels.\* But I must check my curiosity: for to attempt a full description of Jehovah's flying throne would be as preposterous as painting a sun beam, or imitating those limners who absurdly draw the refulgent sun on the innkeeper's sign board. Let me rather turn my views towards another less dazzling less terrific throne, namely a throne of grace. No fire or flame surrounds that throne except heart warming flames of redeeming love. O my fellow sinners, who are heavy laden with guilt, why will ye not accompany me to this mild throne, surrounded with the rainbow of the Gospel covenant, where every penitent may find “ mercy to pardon

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\* This notion is not unscriptural; angels are expressly called God's chariots who encompassed mount Sinai in the form of fiery chariots Ps. lxxviii. 17. Hence the chariot of fire which carried Elijah up to heaven was probably a conveyance of angels, who might be called fiery chariots on account of their fiery bright appearances: therefore God is said to make his ministering angels flames of fire. Heb. i. 7.

don and grace to help in every time of need" But if you will not come to this throne of grace for these invaluable blessings, know that ye must at the last day be dragg'd before that fiery flying throne just now describ'd, of which we have been taking a survey; a throne which you will find dre'dful beyond description or even conception; for as Daniel here describes it, 'tis like the fiery flame; and the wheels on which it rolls along resemble burning fire. And know O careless prayerless sinners, that this flaming flying throne is even now on the road towards you. Hark! do you not almost hear the thundering sound of his chariot wheels? and doth not their blazing appearance shoot lightning into your guilty consciences! Cast a second look at this flying fiery throne or car; and see what riseth from underneath its rapid wheels; viz. not clouds of dust, but living flames bursting forth and rolling before the chariot in a torrent of liquid fire—We are here told that "a fiery stream issued forth from before Him. And can the sinner, with all his unpardon'd sins and aggravated guilt appear unappal'd end unmoved before this awful throne and more awful Judge who will sit upon it: May he not rather cry out with those in Malachi "Who may abide the day of his coming or stand when He appeareth; especially if, besides the awfulness of the throne and the greater awfulness of the sitting Judge, we consider that amazing solemnity of Jehovah's Angelic retinue and shining Life guards, which are to be the subject of my next Meditation. But after all, if infidelity will not permit you to believe that this burning throne of judgment is moving swiftly towards you ye cannot deny that you are moving as fast towards it as winged time can carry you. And if you and I had but a firm unwavering belief of these big events, and a feeling sense of them habitually on our minds, how would it expel that carelessness vanity and levity which too often flutters in our minds. That seriousness and gravity which remarkably appear'd in St. Jerom was under God very much owing to what himself thus declar'd—"Methinks these words are almost always sounding in mine ears. *Arise ye dead and come to judgment.*

*A second Meditation on the same subject.*

Chap. VII. 9, 10.

**I** Beheld 'till the thrones were cast down; and the Ancient of Days did sit; whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands minister'd unto Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him; the judgment was set, and the books were open'd.

My mind having been strongly impress'd and affected with the first view I took of the great and grand scene which these verses plac'd before my admiring eyes: I now sit down to take a second view of it. And I pray God it may not share the fate of almost all earthly scenes and sights; which, the oftner they are gaz'd at and inspected, the less striking and affecting they become. But as the objects now before me relate to eternal things of the highest importance and concernment to me and all mankind, oh may my soul, be still more and more deeply impress'd and affected by them! Having already contemplated the former verse I now proceed to this latter—"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him (i. e. the marching Judge); thousand thousands minister'd unto Him; and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: judgment was set, and the books were opened"—What a countless number of amazing objects do all at once burst in upon me in this greatest and grandest Assize that ever was held in the universe. As I cannot take a distinct survey of all of them at once, let me fix my attention first on those objects which most immediately concern myself, namely

I. The erection of a great majestic Tribunal; and the Judge of all the world taking his seat upon it.

II. Doom's day Books lying open before Him.



### III. The vast assembly conven'd on that occasion, namely the inhabitants of two worlds.

With reference to the first of these points I am here told that Daniel in his visions saw " judgment set; i. e. the Court was call'd, and every thing settled and adjusted for the great trials which were now to take place. That there will be a general judgment of persons, characters, and actions so soon as this earthly state of trial is wholly over, may be argu'd from express scripture assertions. Our Lord very largely and particularly describes the process of it at the last day in Matt. xxv. St. Paul also informs us Acts xvii. 31. that God hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness: yea this fundamental doctrine is ascertain'd in several of the epistles: too numerous to be cited at large. In Rev. xx. we read of " a great white throne where the dead both small and great stood before God, and the books were open'd; and the dead were judged out of the things written in those books according to their works" Nay this doctrine of a future judgment was known and credited before there was a bible to reveal it; even before the deluge and near the beginning of the world: for Enoch the 7th descendant from Adam prophesied saying " Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his Saints to judge the world Jude xiv. 15. But to proceed: as the voice of scripture, so the voice of conscience loudly proclaims a future Judgment; Indeed an awful tribunal is erected in the breasts of all mankind, both Jews, Christians, and Pagans, which they carry continually about with them and in which as a Divine observes, " conscience is at once both accuser, witness, and judge, binding over the sinner to eternal judgment. This fills the most profligate wretches with horror and keen stings upon the commission of some atrocious crime: the same it often doth even when the crime is concealed from the eyes and knowledge of mortals: nay it reaches those lawless tyrants, whom the laws of men cannot bind. When men have fled from the judgment of fellow creatures; yet go where they will, conscience as officer to the Supreme judge still keeps hold of them, and reserves them in its chains to the judgment of the great day" But here I must not

dissemble: an evil heart of unbelief within me has some times suggested that conscience is probably the only Divine judge that mankind must ever have; and that the lashes it gives in this life are the only scourges that sinners are ever to feel. But I soon found this to be a mistake: because conscience doth seldom scourge sinners in this life in a degree proportionable to the magnitude of their crimes. I have observ'd that the greatest and most long continued sinners are oft times more harden'd and past feeling than lesser sinners Eph. iv. 19. But 'tis high time to drop this point, seeing the two arguments now drawn from Scripture and Conscience have amply convinc'd me that there will be a future Judgment. Therefore dismissing that clause—The judgment was set—I proceed

## II. To Dooms-day Books being open'd.

1st. For instance, The Book of Divine Omniscience; which in Mal. iii. 16. is emphatically stiled the Book of God's remembrance "The Lord harken'd and hear'd and a book of remembrance was written before Him," In this memorandum book the great Omniscient puts down all the thoughts, words, and actions of mankind, which are morally and spiritually good or evil. In this unerring Book of accounts, all the talents mankind have received at the hands of God, with the way in which they have used and improved them, are recorded. The many soul opportunities and helps which they ever enjoy'd are likewise faithfully register'd, and must be accounted for; helps internal by checks of conscience and motions of the Holy Spirit; helps external too; such as Sabbaths, Sacraments, Sermons, Prayers of others for them, and christian admonitions tender'd to them—I will only add that on the great reckoning day not only *God's Book of Remembrance*, but the *sinner's Book of Remembrance* will be open'd too. In this world nothing is more common than for sinners to remember other people's faults, and forget their own. It will not be thus at the great day; for then all their past sins, even those committed in most early life will start up in their memories and appear as fresh and glaring as if committed but an hour or minute before.

2dly. Another Book of Remembrance which will be open'd at the day of Judgment is the moral law. This Law being that by

which mankind are to act in this world, it must be the standard according to which they are to be judg'd and sentenced in the next. If mankind had no law pointing out sin and duty, they could not be justly accountable for their actions at the great day. But really Heathens have the same law for substance that Jews and Christians enjoy; and tho' it be considerably defac'd by the apostacy of human nature 'tis in some degree a rule of conduct to them here and of judgment hereafter; this is the Law of nature: of which the Apostle thus speaks in Rom. II. 14, 15, and 16. The Gentile Heathens which have not the (*written*) law do shew the works of the law (viz. law of nature) written in their own hearts, which will either accuse or excuse them in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Again,

A 3d. Book of Remembrance which will be opened at Doom's day is the Book of Conscience; in which all spiritual debts are so completely set down, that it cannot be a subterfuge or shelter to any. 'Tis true this Book like a careless tradesman's book of accounts is sometimes so defaced as to be scarce legible; but 'twill be all over fair and legible on the great reckoning day; neither can a counterfeit book be substituted in its room. The tricking debtor may pretend that his creditor keeps wrong accounts, and that debts are set down which were never contracted, yea the creditor's book of accounts may be lost or destroyed; whereby the debtor sometimes obtains a discharge; but the Book of Conscience can never be lost; because all mankind perpetually carry it in their own bosom's; yea they will take it with them to God's judgment seat. In the mean time, if conscience be one of those Books which the supreme judge will open at the great day; why am I averse to look into this book now; or why afraid to read its contents? Is it because I suspect them to be bad and disheartening; but will they not be more so the longer I delay to inspect and adjust them. To proceed,

A 4th Book which will be open'd at the judgment day is the Book of Life. Rev. xx. 12. I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the Books were open'd; and another Book was open'd, which is the Book of Life; By that Book of  
Life



Life I understand the gospel which is sometimes called "the word of life" Acts v. 20. and here "the Book of Life" because it contains that covenant of Grace which bestows eternal life on all penitent Believers. And really, when any of the fore-mention'd other Books are open'd at the great day they will condemn us; whereas the Book of Life can acquit and justify. But I observe with great anxiety, that this Book of Life is not in Daniel's vision of the Judgment-day; therefore not to be taken into the reckoning at this time. Consequently he only saith—"The Books were opened"—Whereas St. John speaking of a latter Judgment-day not only saith with Daniel "The Books were open'd; but adds—"Another Book was open'd, which is the Book of Life. Thus I have taken a comprehensive survey of three of those prodigious objects which stand before me at these grand Assizes, namely—the awful Tribunal erected—The Ancient of Days descending in all the pomp and grandeur of Heaven to judge the world, and for that purpose mounting his glorious throne—The opening of Doom's day Books which was to decide the eternal states of all mankind—'Tis now high time to look around and take a view of

### III. The vast assembly conven'd on that occasion namely the inhabitants of two worlds.

Some were attending Courtiers to grace the procession of their Almighty Sovereign, others were taking their trials before the bar: This is thus strikingly express'd—"Thousand, thousands minister'd unto Him; and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him" The meaning of which words is that the number convened together at these last universal assizes will be immensely great; even all mankind in their successive generations from the first Adam to the coming of the second; And what a vast assembly will all these make; even greater than ever did or will meet together to all eternity. "Then, as the eloquent Mr. Davies strongly expresseth it, Europeans and Asiatics, the swarthy Sons of Africa and the whole American swarm must mingle together; Jews, Mahumetans, and Pagans, the learned and unlearn'd, Kings

Kings and Subjects, Rich and Poor will then form one promiscuous crowd. Now all the vast armies that conquer'd or fell under Alexander, Cesar, Tamarlain, Gog and Magog will unite in one vast army." But why do I mention the inhabitants of this world only: seeing heaven itself will then pour forth its numberless angelic Hosts in order to grace and aggrandize the procession of the Almighty when He comes to judge the world 2 Thess. i. 7. The mighty Angels, those winged messengers of God, will fly swiftly thro' all the regions of the universe to gather the Elect together from every quarter Matt. xxiv. 31. They will bring the children of God with sparkling joy in their countenances before their Father's throne to receive the sentence of come ye blessed of my Father, inherit a kingdom, &c. The same ministr'ing Angels too will fetch the ungodly out of their caverns and hiding places, and drag them before the judgment seat of their affronted Sovereign to receive the condemning sentence. Nay evil Angels will then make their appearance too. We are expressly told that Angels (viz. fallen Angels) must be judged as well as fallen mankind 1 Cor. vi. 3. Hence they are said to be reserved in chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day 2 Pet. ii. 4. And (as the last quoted Author speaks) "What horribly majestic figures will those rebel angels make at the bar of God: Angels and Archangels stript of their primitive purity and glory, and lying in ruins! those gygantic forms of terror and deformity."—But these are objects which too much shock and distress the mind when long pored upon: Let me therefore turn my views to others which are more cheering. Yonder I discern thronging legions clustering around the Monarch's tribunal. In what thick ser squadrons do they stand together! watching and waiting the last decisive trial and doom of earth-born mortals. But who or what are they? Are they such creeping mortals as we are? Have they faces of clay like ours? No; they are all Princes; yea more than Princes; Every face is like the noon-day sun: every eye like a morning star; every feature is that of a smiling Cherub; all their robes are the floating drapery of Heaven; and all their motions equal those of a shooting sun beam. Why; I perceive they are those thousand thousands whom Daniel saw standing in the quality of ministring servants to the great Monarch of the universe—But while I am intently viewing these striking ob-

jects at a distance let me not overlook, much less forget one a deal nearer home and in which I am more deeply concern'd; namely Myself, who must hereafter appear among "the ten thousand times ten thousand" that are to stand before the Judge of all the world. And oh how anxious should I be to appear there in a drefs, of which I shall neither be ashamed nor confounded, namely the robe of Christ's justifying righteousness; also in the garment of a personal righteousness, wrought internally ~~inwardly~~ by the renovating Spirit of God, and evidenced externally by doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with my God. Micah. vi. Thus I have taken an affecting view of those awful solemnities of Doom's day which Daniel had a view of in the passage under present consideration. The supreme Judge hath been described: his glorious Attire and numerous Retinue have been decipher'd: his tremendous Throne has been delineated: and Doom's day Books opened; And now methinks if the Christian world did really believe this important article of faith, viz. a future Judgment; (which is known and profess'd even among heathen nations) they could not harden their hearts as they do; nor could iniquity abound so much in gospelized countries. Would there be so much swearing, cursing, and profane discourse if they firmly believed what our Saviour saith, namely "that for every idle word which men speak they must give an account on that day"—Would there be so much lying, hypocrisy, cheating, and clandestine naughtiness if they fully credited what the same eternal Judge saith "There is nothing secret that shall not be made manifest; nor any thing hid that shall not be known" In a word, would there be so much extortion, oppression, and hard heartedness to the poor and afflicted if mankind rightly believed that saying of the Apostle James "He shall have Judgment without mercy who hath shewed no mercy"—'Tis impossible—To conclude; An evil heart of unbelief is the root of all sin.



*The Son of God under the mediatorial character of Son of Man appearing for us in the utmost crisis of danger and permitted to arrest eternal judgment, adjourning it to the last day; being a Meditation on Chap. VII. 13, 14.*

**I** Saw in the night Visions and behold one like the Son of Man came in the clouds of Heaven to the Ancient of days and they brought Him near before Him; and there was given Him dominion and glory, and a kingdom that all People, Nations and Languages should serve Him, His dominion is an everlasting dominion, &c.

How dark a cloud hung over the human race when Daniel in vision beheld Jehoyah (the Ancient of Days) touring along on a flying throne to judge a sinful guilty world! How splendid his attire whose garment was white as snow! How pompous and magnificent his retinue! viz.—“Thousand thousands of ministering angels.” With what a rapid career did his chariot move when its glowing wheels raised, not clouds of dust, but balls of fire bursting from underneath and on each side! and what a solemn business did He enter upon when He sat down on his awful tribunal and open’d doom’s day Books; those awful Books which condemn the whole human race that have committed actual sin! And what can guilty mankind do, or to whom can they fly for relief in such a dangerous crisis? Is there no Days man nor Intercessor? Yes, in the very same night-vision, and in the very next verses\* Daniel

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\* Two verses indeed intervene between the Ancient of Days coming to judgment, and the Son of Man coming to arrest judgment. But those verses having nothing to do with what immediately went before, and comes after, they are evidently misplaced by Transcribers and should have been join’d to the 8th with which they are closely connected in sense and matter.

niel " beheld one like the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days ; and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom that all People Nations should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, &c. In these words, as they stand connected with what went before is,

*Ht. That the Almighty (the Ancient of days) had for many past ages been so affronted by the great wickedness of the world, that He would have come forth against it in the most tremendous manner with an intent to execute judgment upon it ; if it had not been for the interposition of some gracious Days-man or Mediator.*

*Udly. That the Son of God under the character of Son of Man flew to the relief of this sinful world at the most critical and seasonable time.*

We here find that when the supreme Judge had mounted his tribunal, had open'd Doom's-day Books, and was a going to pass the awful sentence on ten thousand times ten thousand who stood before Him, then even then did the Son of Man come in the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days in order to receive the Mediatorial kingdom, and to act as an interceding Mediator. How affecting was this ! Could any thing be more so ? No certainly. Had we seen Isaac lying bound on the flaming altar, and the uplifted arm of a dear Father constrain'd to level the killing knife at Him, and ready to give Him the fatal stab ; and then, but never before to espy the sacrificial ram imperceptibly substituted in his room by God's appointment ; how would such a scene have rais'd us in a moment from a transport of sympathizing grief to a sudden transport of joy. I will mention another case. Some have been spectators in the trial of a felon at a county assize ; they have seen the capital crime clearly proved against him ; they have heard the jury bring in their verdict (guilty) ; they have heard my Lord Judge sum

sum up the evidences against the trembling malefactor at the bar, and just a going, to denounce the death-sentence. Oh what distress have the spectators been in for the poor convict at that time! But lo! a messenger comes in hastily with a reprieve from his Majesty. What a sudden change doth this make in the faces of the court! How does every humane bosom rejoice over the reprieved felon! hoping that his merciful Prince may yet have a faithful subject, and God a sincere penitent: but the joy felt by the pardon'd criminal is unutterable. But what comparison is there between this case, and that which lyes before me. In this latter case I behold not a single malefactor standing before an earthly judge and sentenced to a temporal death; but ten thousand times ten thousand standing before the Divine tribunal: I see the judgment seat fixt; and doom's-day Books open'd; and, what is still more awful, I see all these numberless tribes condemn'd; and myself among the rest; condemn'd by the Book of conscience, and the Book of that law which saith "Curst is every one that continueth not in all things written in this law." Certainly even Angels who are attentive spectators of such a scene could not, if their natures and happiness would it, admit could not, I say, refrain a groan and tear on such a sorrowful occasion—But look up. Who is He that cometh flying on a cloud! Is He an helping friend, or hurtful foe? O a Friend, a Day's-man, a Mediator saying, "lo I come; I have paid the ransom-price, therefore let these debtors be set free; I have bore the curse that they may be deliver'd from it and inherit the eternal blessing" What a gracious seasonable interposition was this just between the time that Doom's-day Books are open'd, and the condemning sentence denounced—But why was help with held till matters came to this extremity? Surely in order to set off the greatness of the deliverance, to render it more conspicuous, more memorable, and more thankfully received. When any great deliverance or mercy bursts in upon us, and appears suddenly for our relief, at a time when the face of providence is overspread with the thickest clouds of adversity, and our own minds with a black cloud of despondency, then is a deliverance peculiarly affecting; yea then the face of salvation resembles the sun rising at midnight: 'tis too strange not to be regarded, 'tis too affecting not to be remember'd; and too great not to meet



meet with a thankful heart. 'Tis signally so in sudden cases and other disasters—Having thus taken a brief survey of the general truths exhibited in the present memorable passage, I cannot do my subject justice without taking a separate view of each part. Now the first astonishing object which strikes my mind is,

I. The strange appearance which the uncreated Son of God made when He was now riding majestically thro' the heavens and presenting himself before Jehovah's throne incircl'd with thousand thousands of glorious Angels.

He appear'd in the form of a man only—"In my night visions I beheld one like the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days" Strange! that He should appear in this mean selfabasing form amidst the greatest and grandest assembly that ever met together; after He had been so lately seen walking familiarly in a fiery furnace with three poor captives and outcasts in the magnificent form of Son of God Chap. III. 25. Now this at first glance look'd very preposterous to me; till I consider'd that if this Son of God had made his appearance in the furnace as a Son of Man only it would neither have been so encouraging to the poor forlorn sufferers Martyrs, nor so overawing to their royal persecutor. On the other hand, if this illustrious Personage had appear'd in this latter assembly of celestial courtiers under the form of Son of God, the sight could not have been so striking; because it would only have been what they were always accustom'd unto. A 2d object which peculiarly engages my thoughts in the description given of the Son of Man's journey to the grand assizes and to the supreme Judge, just ready to denounce the condemning sentence against an apostate world is,

II. The vehicle which convey'd the Son of Man to the supreme Judge at these grand assizes; namely the clouds.

Some refer this to that cloud which on ascension day carried Him up to the celestial throne Acts i. 9. And perhaps to no period

of time is the memorable vision under present contemplation, more fitly applicable than to our Redeemer's ascension into Heaven where in a crouded assembly of Angels He appear'd in his human nature and presented the memorial of his death and sacrifice before the throne, whereby vindictive Divine Justice was now averted, and that final condemnation, for which the wicked world had made itself so very ripe. A 3d wonder which draws my attention is,

III. The grand convoy which escorted the Son of Man on his road to heaven at the time of his resurrection and ascension, *namely* a Band of Angels.

"They brought Him near before Him" saith Daniel. As an host of Angels attended our Lord's birth and a couple of them his resurrection, so a shining train of them are suppos'd to attend and adorn his triumphant ascension. And O! if these angelic Hosts introduc'd our Divine Chieftain into the field of earthly combat with such a chearful triumphant song; with what triumphant shouts wo'd they conduct this conquering hero from the field of battle into his Father's presence to receive the glorious reward of all his services and conquests: and what was that was, the latter 14th verse thus declares, "To the Son of Man was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all People and Nations should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion" &c. This dominion and glory which the Son of Man now receiv'd could not be that essential glory which He had with his Father before the world was John xvii. 5. but that mediatorial kingdom and glory which was now conferr'd upon Him in consequence of the expiatory sacrifice He had offer'd up in the quality of Priest and Mediator Isa. liii. 12. And seeing the Father delegated that kingdom to his Son on account of his sufferings and Sacrifice for a guilty world it undeniably proved that both were acceptable to the Father: perhaps more acceptable than the songs and services of those thousand thousands who now minister'd unto Him: and tho' this Divine Mediator now approach'd Him when He appear'd in terrible majesty on his tribunal, which was  
all

all on a flame, 'tis exprefsly faid He was permitted to " come near unto Him." Tho' He appear'd in the mean figure of a man compaffed about with infirmities the Ancient of Days did not regard Him lefs, but rather more; becaufe 'twas a fuller token of his love both to his Father, and to laſped mankind. So that the human earthly form which He now aſſum'd might poſſibly appear more lovely to his Father than the ſtarry robes of Angels and Archangels. And was this Son of God ſo precious in his Father's ſight on account of what He has done for us, how precious ſhould He be to us who derive ſuch inestimable bleſſings from him in life, death and to all eternity. How amazing was that redeeming love which allur'd Him down from a celeftial throne and palace to theſe terrestrial regions of ſin and wo! How ſwiftly did He fly to man's relief! Certainly the clouds, thoſe chariots of heaven, did not carry the Son of Man with greater celerity on this important errand than his own love did. Whenever therefore deſponding chriſtians look forward to the day of judgment, and view doom's-day Books open'd againſt them; whereby their hearts will perhaps meditate terror, let them by faith behold the Lamb of God opening for them thoſe ſeals of the Book of Life mentioned Rev. v. 9. how chearfully may they join the church triumphant in ſinging that new ſong, ſaying Worthy art thou O Lamb to take the Book and open its ſeals, for Thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeem'd us to God by thy blood out of every Kindred, Tongue, People and Nation: Amen.



1773

all of a sudden, the people of the country, which is  
now called the "New World," began to be  
discovered by the Europeans. The first of these  
discoveries was made by Christopher Columbus in  
1492, when he sailed across the Atlantic Ocean  
and reached the island of San Salvador. He then  
sailed on to other islands and to the mainland of  
North America. The people of the country were  
very different from the Europeans. They had  
different customs, different languages, and  
different ways of life. The Europeans were  
very interested in the people of the country  
and in their ways of life. They wanted to  
know more about them and to learn from them.  
The people of the country were very friendly  
to the Europeans. They showed them the way  
to the best places to live and to the best  
places to grow crops. They also showed them  
how to make things that the Europeans  
needed. The Europeans were very grateful  
to the people of the country. They gave them  
many things that they had never seen before.  
The people of the country were very happy  
to receive these things. They also learned  
many things from the Europeans. They learned  
how to make better tools and weapons. They  
also learned how to grow different crops and  
how to build better houses. The people of the  
country and the Europeans became very  
friendly to each other. They lived together  
in peace and harmony for many years.  
The people of the country were very brave  
and very strong. They fought many battles  
with the Europeans. They won many of these  
battles. The Europeans were very surprised  
by the bravery and strength of the people of  
the country. They were also very impressed  
by the way that the people of the country  
lived. They wanted to live like them. They  
wanted to be brave and strong like them. They  
wanted to be happy and content like them.  
The people of the country were very good  
people. They were very kind and very  
generous. They shared their food and their  
clothing with the Europeans. They also  
shared their knowledge with them. The  
Europeans were very grateful to the people  
of the country. They gave them many  
things that they had never seen before.  
The people of the country were very happy  
to receive these things. They also learned  
many things from the Europeans. They  
learned how to make better tools and  
weapons. They also learned how to grow  
different crops and how to build better  
houses. The people of the country and the  
Europeans became very friendly to each  
other. They lived together in peace and  
harmony for many years.



## C H A P. X.

*Daniel's second religious Fast succeeded by another glorious Vision of the Messiah in an human form; who being attended by two ministering Angels, by them He reveal'd to his heaven favour'd Prophet several important events. The strange impressions which this Vision made on Daniel:*

**I**N the third year of Cyrus King of Persia a Ver. 1  
thing was reveal'd to Daniel, &c.

What thing? Why that the temple work at Jerusalem, which had been so gloriously begun (Ezra i.) was now unhappily obstructed by some envious undermining ne'ighbours (Ezra iv.) This prompted Daniel to keep a second religious fast which lasted three weeks. This three weeks fast was not an abstinence from all food, as his former was in chapter ix. (that would have been impracticable); but it consisted in an abstinence from all the delicacies of life. "In those days, says he, I Daniel was mourning three full weeks: I ate no pleasant bread, nor animal food, neither did I anoint myself (*according to the custom of eastern nations*)—At the end of this long Fast (which fell out on the 24th day of the First Jewish month, which nearly answers to the 4th of our April,) we find Daniel, with some of his waiting-men, walking along the banks of Hiddekel, (in after ages call'd Tigris) and which was one of those four large rivers that ran thro' Eden's spacious garden soon after the creation of the world Gen. ii. 14. Here he espy'd a wonderful glorious personage standing on the surface of that famous river, or hovering a little above it. In figure it appear'd to be a man; in dress it resembled the High Priest when he enter'd the Holy of Holys in his Pontiffic robes on the great day of atonement. "I looked, said he, and behold a certain man clothed in linen (*resembling the High-priest's Ephod*) His upper robe seem'd to be fasten'd close to his

loins with a girdle made of the fine gold of Uphaz. The cheft of his body reſembled the precious beryl-ftone in colour; his arms and feet were like poliſh'd braſs i. e. of a flaming fiery colour."

- But, intimates Daniel, what ſhall I ſay of his face and features; theſe were more glorious than all the reſt. "His face had the appearance of light'ning; his eyes ſparkled like lamps of fire; and his voice did not reſemble that of a ſingle man, but of a great
- 6 multitude, when all of them liſt up their voices at once." But who was this wonderful perſonage that now appear'd to Daniel in the form of a man, and garb of an High-prieſt; but with a viſage more glorious than either man or Angel? It was certainly Meſſiah, our Goſpel High-prieſt who had appear'd to Him in the ſame form twice before; and afterward to St. John in Rev. i. Let us now conſider the impreſſions made on Daniel and his attendants
- 7 by this Divine apparition—"I Daniel ſaw the Viſion; and tho' the men that were with me ſaw not the Viſion; the bare preſence of it made ſuch ſtrange impreſſions upon them, that "a great quaking fell on them; and they fled to hide themſelves; and I was left alone; and the viſion took ſuch hold of me too "that there remain'd no ſtrength in me; for my comlineſs was turn'd into corruption" i. e. I dare ſay I reſembled a pale and gaſtly corps entering upon its firſt ſtage of corruption. 'Tis true, my hearing ſtill remain'd; for "I hear'd the voice of his words; and when
- 9 I heard them I fell flat upon my face on the ground; and my ſpirits being ſpent, I ſoon ſunk into a deep ſleep"—Lord how feeble a creature is man! Here we behold a great Prophet, Courtier and Statesman, thro' a tranſient ſight of the Son of Man, lying proſtrate on the ground with a viſage pale as death, and with limbs motionleſs as a ſtatue. See we next by what means he was raiſed up, and brought to himſelf again; Now as Majeſty had ſtruck him down, mercy liſted him up, namely by the hand of a miniſtering Angel, "who touch'd him, and ſet him upon his knees and on
- 10 the palms of his hands" But tho' Daniel was hereby a little raiſed and ſtrengthen'd, he ſtill reſembled thoſe weakly infants who can only riſe to their knees, and reſt on their hands, but cannot ſtand on their feet. Therefore in the next verſe the Angelic Meſſenger ſpeaks lovingly and tenderly to him (as an affectionate nurſe would do to her feeble charge when fallen) "and bids him
- riſe



rise to his feet again ; and with this word of command He imparted a power to obey it. But tho' I was hereby rais'd to my feet, says he, I stood trembling; for my legs totter'd under me, partly thro' weakness of body and anxiety of mind. To remove the latter grievance the Angelic Messenger inform'd me that tho' it was twenty-one days or three weeks since I began my Fast-day prayers, those prayers were heard and graciously accepted on the first day; and that God now sent Him on purpose to inform me of it, and 12 that He would have imparted to me the pleasing information sooner, if the obstruction thus mention'd in the next verse had not stood in the way "The Prince of the Kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days." By Prince of Persia some understand 13 the Son of King Cyrus, viz. Artaxerxes, who preceded over the affairs of Babylon and Jerusalem during his Father's absence in a foreign war. That this Artaxerxes had been induced by the Samaritans those clandestine enemies of the Jews to obstruct the rebuilding of their temple we are largely inform'd in Ezra iv. 7. and following verses. Others by this Prince of Persia more fitly understand one of those fallen Angels who have their provinces assign'd them by Beelzebub the prince of devils for the purpose of doing mischief; as well as Gabriel and Michael, in this chapter, had certain provinces assign'd them to do good in. One of these apostate Angels is supposed to be stationed at this time in the Kingdom of Persia; and by his evil suggestions to dissuade Artaxerxes the Prince of Persia from permitting the Jews to go on with their temple work—The Prince of the Kingdom of Persia, says Gabriel, withstood me twenty-one days, i. e. three weeks, even all the time that thou didst fast and pray for Jerusalem; but, adds He in the next words, my fellow Angel Michael flew to my assistance; and so I got the victory. "Lo Michael one of the chief Princes, (*i. e. of the highest order of Angels*) came to help me; and I remained with the Kings of Persia." viz. with King Cyrus and his Son, then deputy King—Gabriel having thus apologiz'd for his coming no sooner to Daniel; He tells Him that his design in visiting him at this time "was to make him understand what should befall his people the Jews in the latter days" To this friendly Angelic message Daniel attempted a 14 reply in the next verse; but was so thunder-struck by the former

15 vision of the Son of God that he remained speechless. And now  
 the Son of God himself drew near to Daniel ; not indeed with  
 the overpouring Majesty that had knock'd him down at the be-  
 gining of the vision ; but with the mildest countenance, and most  
 friendly helping hand—" Behold one in similitude like unto the  
 16 Sons of men touched my lips ; then I opened my mouth, and  
 spake, saying unto Him that stood before me : O my Lord ; by  
 the vision my sorrows return upon me ; and I have retain'd no  
 17 strength ; for how can the Servant of this my Lord converse with  
 that my LORD," i. e. with that glorious personage whose pre-  
 sence and splendor struck me both speechless and motionless at the  
 18 begining of this vision—" Then one in the appearance of a man  
 19 came again and touched me and strengthen'd me ; and said—" O  
 man greatly beloved, fear not, peace be unto thee ; be strong, yea  
 be strong"—And when He had spoken unto me, I was strength-  
 en'd, and said, Let my Lord speak ; for thou hast strengthen'd  
 me. Now this return of the Son of Man or Messiah to Daniel  
 induc'd Gabriel to withdraw (as indeed 'tis fit that servants should  
 give way to their Masters) ; I say to withdraw and take his leave  
 20 of Daniel in these words " Now will I return to fight (i. e. con-  
 tend) with the Prince of Persia. And when I am gone forth  
 (i. e. from this place) to the Prince of Grecia shall come i. e. (as  
 the late Dr. Louth well explains it) the tutelar Angel of the  
 Grecian Empire will appear in the court of Heaven, and offer his  
 reasons for translating the empire from the Persians to the Greeks,  
 whose Kings will be more favourable to thy people the Jews than  
 some of the Persian Emperors were"—After this Gabriel closeth  
 the present conference and chapter with these words. " And  
 there is none that holdeth with me in these things (*or that joineth  
 with me in defending the cause of the Jewish nation*) except Michael  
 21 your Prince or guardian-Angel, who standeth up for the children  
 of thy people Chapter xii. 1.

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

1. What an abstemious and mortified man of God was Daniel,  
 who tho' he had resided many years at Eastern Courts, where  
 luxury and high living were so prevalent ; yet often set apart sea-  
 sons

sons for extraordinary fasting and prayer; in which he spent not merely whole days, but sometimes whole weeks together; as this and the foregoing chapters relate. How often too do we read of our pious forefathers devoting set times to fasting and extraordinary prayer: in which they receiv'd special answers from heaven, and by means of which their souls remarkably flourish'd in spirituals. Is it not very much owing to the neglect of these mortifying grace-promoting duties that we discern so small a difference between the frames, tempers and conduct of those who make the most specious profession, and of others who make none; also of those complaints that professors often make of their receiving no sensible answers to their prayers, tho' Daniel did.

2. How astonishingly condescending was the Son of God in visiting and appearing to mankind under the humiliating form of the Son of Man so many ages before his incarnation! How often did this dear lover of souls descend from heaven and appear *visibly* on earth in Daniel's time; even no fewer than five times in this and three foregoing chapters. O the love of Christ! What an attractive load-stone was that which so often drew down this Prince of glory from a palace and throne in heaven and from the society of the most perfect loving and glorious beings in the universe, in order to associate with deprav'd and wretched mortals on earth, even before his incarnation.

3. If the mere appearance of the Son of God was so frightful to an holy Prophet that was dearly beloved by Him, what will He be to law-breaking gospel rejecting sinners when He cometh at the day of judgment in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not his gospel! How will his countenance shoot light'ning into the guilty bosoms of sinners! how will his flaming eyes dart fire into their inflamed consciences, and how will those dre'dful arms and feet, here compar'd to burnish'd brags, crush impenitent sinners, and tread them in the winepress of his wrath! In consequence of this need we wonder that the desires of saints and impenitent sinners should so widely differ at the hour of death and day of judgment: that the language of the former should be "Amen, come Lord Jesus, come quickly" Rev. xxii. But the cry of the latter be "ye mountains and rocks fall on us and hide us from the wrath of God and the Lamb Rev. vi.



4. What widely different effects will a sight of Christ produce on glorified Saints in heaven from what it does on imperfectly sanctified christians on earth. 'Tis observable that when glorious angels repeatedly appear'd to Daniel in this prophetic vision the good prophet was not nearly so much appall'd, terrified, and shock'd as when the Son of God appear'd to him in an human form. Scarce any thing short of a dissolution by death could (as has been shew'd) equal the shock given both to his body and soul when one in the form of Son of man appear'd to him on earth with rays of Divinity shining round Him verse 6. But widely different impressions will a sight of Christ make on the glorified in heaven where all sin is purg'd out of the soul, and the eyes of the mind so clarified and strengthen'd as to be able with open face to behold the glory of the Lord with the highest transports of delight. Were it not so, the Apostle could not have felt so strong a desire to depart and to be with Christ Phil. i. 23.

5. Was Daniel the darling of heaven and greatly belov'd by the God of heaven, even when heaven and its celestial inhabitants were so formidable to him verse 11, 19, let no desponding christians argue their foul-state to be bad merely on account of gloomy frowning providences. Know O drooping christians that God's inward affections and intentions are not to be measur'd by his outward dispensations. All your present crosses and disasters may be replete with Divine Love, and issue in your final happiness. When the Son of Man and the Angel Gabriel drew near to Daniel on the banks of Hiddekel he view'd them as foes rather than friends; consequently he was so amaz'd as to fall prostrate on the ground in a swoon like a slain man; and yet he was all that time "O Daniel greatly beloved." But how hard a task doth faith find this to be. Scarce any thing is more difficult than to convince broken hearted Christians, that God loves them with a special love when they are in deep distress and under the frowns of heaven, especially when guilt seemingly stalks before their awaken'd consciences and the flaming sword of vindictive Divine justice seems brandish'd over them, then to act faith in the love of God is a most arduous task, and gospel-promises must be often repeated before the trembling soul can lay hold of them. Therefore while Daniel lay in an agony of distress both Gabriel and the Son

of God found it necessary to repeat these words, and apply this cordial twice over, "*O man, greatly beloved, fear not.*"

6. How many striking specimens do the six last chapters of this Book exhibit of the friendly ministration of Angels. Yea in almost half of the Books in the Old Testament and several of the New is this same doctrine set forth. The friendly offices of Angels are also specified in Ps. xxxiv. 7. "The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them In Heb. i. 4. they are stiled ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto the heirs of salvation. Yea in Matt. xviii. 10. even little infants are said to be favour'd with guardian Angels. Nay, we read that whole Provinces and Kingdoms have Angel guards and inspectors set over them. The Angel Gabriel appears to have been stationed in the Kingdom of Persia; yea at the seat of government there (See verse 13, of this chapter) As to Michael the Archangel, he appears to have been the guardian Angel of the Jews. Hence in ix. 21, he is call'd Michael their Prince; also Michael the great Prince who standeth for the children of Daniel's people chapter xii. 1. This opinion concerning Angels superintending whole Kingdoms is modestly patroniz'd by Louth in his late judicious Commentary on the present and two subsequent chapters. 'Tis also countenanc'd by a passage in Deut. xxxii. 8. which in the Septuagint (that oldest and most authentic translation of the Bible) reads thus "When the most High divided among the nations their inheritance He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the Angels of God."—And now, if Angels, according to what has been demonstrated are so officious in helping forward our salvation, can we be careless and sluggish in promoting our own? O let us deeply ponder those stimulating lines of Dr. Young,

Michael has fought our battles : Raphael sung  
Our triumphs : Gabriel on our errands flown,  
Sent by the Sovereign : and are these O man  
Thy Friends ; thy firm allies ? and thou,  
(Shame burn thy cheek to cinder) rival to the brutes.

## C H A P. XI.

*The Angel Gabriel predicts and reveals to Daniel many great events referring to his own native country Judea; also to the ne'bouring Kingdoms of Syria, Egypt and Persia.*

**I**N this chapter the Angel Gabriel fulfills the promise He had made to Daniel in chapter x. 14. "I am come, said He, to make thee understand what shall befall thy People (the Jews) in the latter days." But previous to this, adds Gabriel, I must inform thee what good service I did to those thy people in the first year that King Darius seiz'd the throne of conquer'd Babylon, and was inclin'd to release the captive Jews there: "I stood by Him and secretly strengthen'd and confirm'd his inclinations to so good a work verse 1." Observe, 'tis encouraging to consider that good angels are as active in exciting and strengthening good inclinations in the human heart, as evil Angels are in fomenting and strengthening bad ones verse 2. And now, says Gabriel, I will shew thee the truth, behold three Kings shall stand up in Persia (namely after Cyrus the present reigning King) He refers to Cambyses the Son of Cyrus; to Smerdis, who falsely pretended to be another Son; and to Darius Hystaspes, his Son-in-law. After the demise of these three Persian Kings, a fourth will arise far richer than they all, adds Gabriel: this was King Xerxes, whose great riches may be estimated by the vast army once rais'd and maintain'd by Him against the realm of Grecia, viz. between two and three million; suppos'd to be the greatest army that ever appear'd on earth. But Greece conquered it with an handful of men. This leads Gabriel to speak of the greatest hero of Greece; yea perhaps of the whole world (viz. Alexander the great): verse 3, 4. That mighty King shall stand up who will rule with great dominion (*for He shall conquer the greater part of the known world*) And his will shall be his law: after this his kingdom will be divided, not among his posterity but between his four Generals towards the four winds of heaven namely East, West, North, and South."—This seem'd exceeding improbable. because  
Alexander



Alexander had three natural heirs ; namely two Sons and a Brother. But these were soon cut off ; whereby this prophecy was fulfilled beyond expectation. His four Generals having acquired the power, they soon added to it the name of Kings. 'Tis only of the northern Kings who governed Syria, with some adjacent provinces ; and of the Southern Kings who reign'd over Egypt, that mention is made in the subsequent parts of this chapter ; because these alone intermeddled with the affairs of the Jews : for as Judea, which was a lesser province, boarder'd upon and lay between those two more potent kingdoms, it was always dependent on one of them, and often suffered from both in all their wars with each other. And indeed, like us and a ne'bouring kingdom they were almost always at war with each other ; or forming political plans to weaken and supplant one another. In this latter sort of work we find the King of the South (viz. Egypt) employ'd in verse 6. 'Tis foretold, He would give his daughter Berenice in marriage to Antiochus King of the North on condition that He would divorce his present royal Consort ; which was done accordingly ; and a national peace ensued : but as that peace was founded in injustice and craft, Providence blasted it. Tho' the King's daughter of the South, saith Gabriel, will come to the King of the North to make an agreement she shall not retain the power of the arm, i. e. shall have no power over her royal consort ; neither shall He stand to the agreement ; no more He did : for in a while He recalled his former legitimate Queen, and dismissed this illegitimate one—As ten of the next intermediate verses contain nothing important in them ; at least not interesting to us, I pass over them to the 17th and following, which foretell that double attempt which Antiochus King of Syria would make on young Ptolemy King of Egypt. His first attempt to ruin Him would be by force verse 17. “ He shall set his face to enter Egypt with the strength of his whole kingdom ” i. e. with all the military forces in his kingdom : 'tis added—“ And upright ones with Him ”—i. e. many of the pious Jews will enlist themselves into his service, and go with Him. When King Antiochus found He could not accomplish his purpose against young Ptolemy by force, He next attempted it by fraud ; a piece of guileful policy similar to what young Ptolemy's Father had deceitfully practised

tified against him some years before. " He shall give Him the daughter of women, corrupting her faith the latter part of the verse, i. e. He would give his daughter Cleopatra in marriage to King Ptolemy: corrupting her with ill principles to betray her husband to Him; and thereby make Himself master of Egypt: 'tis added, " But she shall not stand on his (viz. on her Father's side) neither be for Him"; but shall wholly cleave to her husband and defend his cause. To proceed: King Antiochus dying, Seleucus Philopeter, his senior Son, succeeded Him in the throne; the most distinguishing characteristic of whose reign was his burthening his subjects with such heavy taxes that he was call'd by way of reproach, (tax-gatherer) Verse 20: and when he was told that by such measures he would lose his friends; his answer was that he knew of no better friends than money. But his reign was very short and the manner of his death is thus prognosticated in the same verse—" He shall not be destroy'd either in anger or in battle; i. e. he must neither be slain in a foreign war, nor massacred at home by his exasperated subjects; which was something strange, considering the factious and barbarous age in which he liv'd; and what an oppressor he had been, Verse 21. " And in his estate (i. e. stead) a vile person (*meaning Antiochus Epiphanes*) shall stand up (*as his successor*; to whom they, viz. the Syrians, shall not give the honour of the kingdom;" but himself shall obtain it by dishonourable means and by flatteries: which predictions this usurper amply verified: for in order to come at the throne he vilely supplanted his elder Brother's Son (who was the next heir to it); and sawn'd upon and flattered those head men in the kingdom who were best able to lift him into the throne: However, this vile man, as vile men in general do, possess'd some commendable qualities; for instance; greater generosity than his predecessors had practis'd. The 24th verse foretells that he would do what his Forefathers had not done: for He shall scatter among them i. e. among his subjects the prey and spoil and riches"— This He actually did upon his coming to the throne. In meeting strangers on the road He would enrich them with unexpected presents, tho' He had never seen them before; and when He stood in the publick streets He would sometimes throw about his money, and calling aloud, would say " Let him take it, to whom  
fortune

fortune shall give it\* No sooner had Antiochus Epiphanes by these guileful insinuating *arts* fix'd himself in the throne at home than he began to act guilefully abroad ; first by making a league with his nephew the King of Egypt, and then marching an hostile army into his dominions soon after verse 23, 24. But that was not all. In verse 26, 'tis predicted that he would basely bribe some of that King's ministers, yea some of his domestics, who were maintain'd at his table to betray, and, if possible, to ruin Him ; a most scandalous piece of treachery this, which the bare light of nature condemns ; therefore this heathen King might have blush'd to commit it ; how much more christian King's by whom alas 'tis too often practis'd—But notwithstanding this foresaid treachery of Antiochus Epiphanes towards his royal nephew, the nephew in a while appeared to be reconciled to his uncle. Hereupon both of them often met together under a shew of friendship ; Antiochus pretending to take care of his nephew's interests ; and the nephew seemingly confiding in his uncle's protection ; but there was no real good-will on the uncle's side ; nor trust or confidence on the nephew's part, Verse 27. “ Both these King's will speak lies at one table, i. e. at one Council board ; but their hearts will be to do mischief (viz. to each other) ; but it shall not prosper.” And no more it did ; for according to that maxim What's begun with deceit will end in disappointment : therefore war brake out a second time ; and the unnatural uncle again invaded his nephew's dominions with an hostile army verse 29. During his stay there, saith Gabriel, false news will arrive at Jerusalem of his death, at which the citizens will publicly rejoice, and begin to make innovations both in their civil and ecclesiastical affairs contrary to his royal mandates ;† and that some revolting mischievous Jews will bring Him intelligence of all this ; which will exasperate Him ; and hasten his return thro' Jerusalem in order to be reveng'd on its inhabitants verse 30, 31, and 36. “ He shall return and be grieved on account of the intelligence given Him by those that forsake the holy covenant i. e. the Jewish religion ;

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\* *Bishop Newton's fulfilment of scripture prophecies on this verse.*

† *Priedeux's Connac. Book 3, part 2.*



ligion; and He shall have indignation against the holy Covenant; and arms shall stand on his part i. e. He will arm his soldiers who will pollute the sanctuary of strength (i. e. the temple, call'd the sanctuary of strength on account of its strong fortifications); and will take away the daily sacrifices; and they will place the abomination that maketh desolate; i. e. they will set up in the sacred temple an idol image; which, being an abomination to the pious priests and people, will induce them to forsake the temple, and leave it desolate when they find it transform'd into an idol-temple"—How exactly doth the after-history of the Maccabees describe the fulfilment of these predictions in the following words: "In those days there went out of Israel wicked men who persuaded many to make a Covenant with the Heathen that were round about them. Then certain of the people were so forward herein, that they went to the King, who gave them licence to do after the ordinances of the heathens; and they forsook the Holy covenant, and join'd themselves to the heathens: and they polluted the sanctuary; and forbad burnt offerings in the temple; and set up the abomination of desolation upon the altar, and built idol altars thro'out the cities of Judea; also 40,000 Jews were slain; and a great number sold into foreign countries for slaves" Hereby this prediction in verse 33, and 35, were literally fulfilled; "Some of them of understanding (i. e. of the intelligent pious Jews) shall fall; yea they shall fall by the sword, by flame and by captivity, to try (*their sincerity*) to purge (*away sin*) and to make them white—Upon the 36, and 37 verse, See Chapter vii. 25, and viii. 25. One thing indeed must not be omitted here, namely the last effort of Antiochus's rage against the Jewish Nation. Verse 44. "Tidings shall trouble Him: therefore He will go forth with fury to destroy, and utterly to make away many." What's here prophetically foretold was many years after this historically related, viz. 1 Macc. iii. 27, &c. where we read what a rage this Syrian Monarch was in when he receiv'd tidings that Judas Maccabeus was making head against him, and had already made great conquests in his Judean territories; and what orders he thereupon gave his General to plant the tabernacles of his palace (i. e. his absolute regal authority) in the glorious holy mountain between the seas" verse 45, i. e. in the holy city Jerusalem, which stood

in a mountainous situation between the Mediterranean sea and the sea of Sodom\*

*Remarks and Inferences.*

1. What a remarkable fulfilment have we of the many predictions set forth in this chapter; yea of all the prophecies contained in the book of Daniel. Certainly no other of the inspired prophets is so particular in marking out the time and concomitant circumstances of each predicted event as this learned Seer was. The wars, the marches, and counter-marches, yea the clandestine dissimulations of the Kings of the North and South, how strongly are they here mark'd, and how minutely describ'd!

2. Did an idolatrous King by the instrumentality of time-serving apostate Jews, overturn true religion and the temple service at Jerusalem verse 30, 32, this shews that religion could never be destroy'd by its openly avowed enemies if it did not receive wounds in the house of its professing friends Zech. xiii. 6. I am firmly perswaded that the hypocrisy of some professors with the loose lives and apostacies of others have given Religion more deadly stabs than all the arguments that infidelity yea than all those engines of torture which cruel persecutors have level'd against it.

3. From these words "They shall place (*viz. in the sanctuary*) the abomination that maketh desolate (verse 31.)" we learn that when any abominations either in doctrine or practice are introduced into the house and worship of God, they spread greater desolations than in any other place. Thus a prophane church member or vicious Minister who stands officiating in the most holy place do more harm to religion than any profligate infidel, yea they cause greater and more lasting desolations than that idol image which King Antiochus caus'd to be set up in the sacred temple. Moral pollutions are more dangerous than those of a ceremonial kind; and living idols of the heart do us more mischief than lifeless idols of wood or stone standing at a distance.

4. From

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\* *Priedaux's Connex. Book 3. part 2. p. 290.*

4. From the description given in this chapter of that idolatrous Prince who haras'd the temple and temple worship of God, it appears that the Old as well as the New Testament Church had an Antichrist. How exactly doth the character here given of Antiochus coincide with that given by an Apostle concerning Antichrist who is said (2 Theff. ii. 4.) "to exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he sitteth in the seat of God." Was not this literally exemplified in Antiochus Epiphanes who is said verse 36 and 37, "to exalt and magnifie himself above every God; and to speak marvelous things against the God of Gods"—A pagan King we here find was an Antichrist. Pagan Emperors have been so too; particularly Nero and others who persecuted the Christian Churches in the isle Patmos; and to whom it may be suppos'd he primarily, tho' not solely, refers in his Apocalypse. I have long consider'd it to be a very ensnaring error in those Protestant Churches who look no where for Antichrist except in the Church of Rome.\* 'Tis to be feared that monster may be seen much nearer home; seeing according to the literal meaning of that word all are Antichrists who in words or deeds oppose the doctrine discipline or worship establish'd by Christ and his Apostles. Hence St. John himself complains that there were many Antichrists in his early day, 1 John ii. 18.

5. When we consider what holy and happy effects issued from those severe persecutions which a cruel idolatrous Prince did by Divine permission inflict on a very religious people we may conclude that God's love to his people is not to be measur'd by his external providential dealings with them. When we read what's said of  
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\* Are there not others too who imagine they see papal Antichrist in some parts of the sacred volume where no real traces of him are to be found? Do not the comments of some Divines on a few verses in the viii, xi and xii chapters of this prophetic history abundantly evince this. But the truth is our pious protestant Fathers suffer'd inconceivably more under papal than pagan Antichrists. And objects by which we or ours have most suffer'd, do more frequently start up in our prejudis'd minds than others do, and do often bias our judgments.



this pious remnant of Jews namely "that they were a people who knew their God, and that they would be strong and do exploits" viz. in defending the cause of God and truth (See verse 33); but however, that "they must fall by the sword, by flame and by captivity" infidelity is ready thus to exclaim; certainly there is no God in heaven who dispenseth justice on earth. But what's thus subjoin'd in verse 35, is sufficient to silence every censure of that sort—"They shall fall to try them, to purge them, and make them white"—Does not this evidently point out a gracious God who will do good to his people in the latter end, whatever troubles befall them by the way. That long train of disasters which frequently harass the godly even more than many of the wicked, may for a time tempt even a Christian, as they once did a pious Jew, to entertain hard thoughts of God and providence at times; but the final issue of events will evince that "God hath done all things well."

6. Do sanctified afflictions produce such happy effects as purging and purifying the soul, why then should we be slavishly afraid of falling under the afflicting hand of God. Who blames the fan for raising the wind when at the same time it purgeth away the chaffy grain. Soap is keen; so also are the teeth of a file; but who finds fault with the hand that useth either of them, when the one washeth away filth, and the other rubs off rust. The best of us retain a mixture of chaff which needs winnowing: of spots which need washing out, and rust which requires the file. Sanctified afflictions mortifie heart corruptions, wean the affections from the world, and awaken the soul to greater seriousness and diligence in the concerns of religion and eternity.

## C H A P. XII.

*In this chapter Gabriel concludes the important predictions begun in the tenth and continued in the eleventh chapters. With these He intermixeth some fundamental articles of faith and heart chearing promises in his farewell speech to aged Daniel a little before that Prophet's decease—*

**T**HRO' out the former prolix chapter we find the Angel Gabriel and his pupil Daniel so deeply engag'd in the political affairs of earthly Kings and Kingdoms, as if they had no higher or better Kingdom in view, nor looked after any thing beyond the gloomy grave. But tho' pious minds may for wise reasons pitch their thoughts on the things of this world, where providence has fix'd their residence for a season, they soon take wing and soar upwards, stretching their pinions forward unto a better country. This did Gabriel and Daniel in this 12th chapter, where we find their raptur'd prophetic minds carried on Angels wings beyond the utmost bounderies of time unto the resurrection of the dead, the final separation of the righteous from the wicked, and the eternal glorification of the former in heaven.

Ver. 1. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince who standeth up for the children of thy People; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was.

In these words we may observe 1st. The emphatic name which Gabriel gives to a fellow Angel, stiling Him "*the great Prince.*" As the infernal crew have a Prince called in Scripture, Beelzebub the Prince of devils; so the shining host of Angels have a Prince, a great Prince, who is able to defeat the mischiefs plotted against them by the prince of devils. The Apostle Jude stiles this Angelic Prince, "Michael the Archangel" because He was above the common rank of Angels. The next observable in this verse is the

the particular office assign'd to Michael, namely, "standing up for the children of Daniel's people," meaning the Jews; that is, He was delegated to become the superintendant and guardian Angel of the Jewish nation. But when would Michael stand peculiarly up for the Jewish nation? certainly towards the end of the world, when, as Gabriel adds in this verse, "There would be such a time of trouble as never had been since there was a nation:" therefore our Saviour, quoting these words, apply'd them in Matt. xxiv. 21, to the dismal times preceding the dissolution of the world; when Gog and Magog under Satan's banner will gather together their numberless armies to ruin the kingdom and subjects of the Messiah; but Michael and his Angels, we are told, will obtain the victory over them, Rev. xii. 7, 8. and chap. xx. 8, 9. And what the blessed consequence will be we read in the latter part of the verse now explaining—"At that time, adds Gabriel, thy people shall be delivered, even every one that shall be written in the book", namely, "the book of life. Blessed privilege! infinitely more eligible than having our names enrolled in the registers of earthly frame, yea than having them on scripture record! For how many whose names have stood in both these registers will not be found in the book of life; and consequently will have no title to eternal life.

Verse 2. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life; and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Here we may observe, 1st. who are they that must arise out of their death-sleep on the resurrection morning, namely not all mankind; because as the Apostle said, *We shall not all sleep; but some will be alive when our Lord cometh to raise the dead.* 1 Cor. xv. But "Many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake" However, do not these words fairly imply that even of those who are to sleep in the dust *all* will not awake on the resurrection morning; but *many* of them only? 'Tis answered; the mode of expression in our English version doth indeed intimate thus much; but the original does not, which reads thus, "The



multitudes that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." Multitudes indeed : seeing the dead under ground will on the resurrection eve be probably millions of times more numerous than the living above ground ever were at any one period. Perhaps this vast globe of earth will by that time be so impregnated with dead bodies, that a single handful of earth can scarce be gather'd up in any part of it which will not contain some particles of the dead.—To proceed; A second point observable in this verse is the condition in which mankind will be found when the Lord of Life cometh to raise them from the dead, namely, sleeping in the dust of the earth. Death is indeed a sleep; a sleep in which the body, tho' lying on a bed of cold clay or hard gravel, enjoys a quiet easy sleep; however an awaking and rising time will come. "The many that sleep in the dust will awake, said Gabriel—In what manner?—" Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt," adds the Angel. Heaven's happiness is here termed life to distinguish it from that death-state to which the souls and bodies of mankind are subjected in their present lapsed state; also to set forth its infinite transcendancy above any happiness enjoyed in this world, which cannot be long, because life itself is short. The last point noticeable in this verse, is the wretched condition of the ungodly and unrighteous on the great resurrection morning. Others, saith Gabriel, must rise to shame and everlasting contempt. But as this will be considered in a subsequent Meditation, I proceed to

Verse 3. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

By the *wise* here I cannot understand those who have wise sagacious heads only; but also gracious hearts and virtuous lives; viz. the religiously wise, who indeed have the best claim to wisdom. Job. xxviii. 28. *The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.* Again, by the persons here said to turn many to righteousness, we must not understand those who are only instrumental in leading others into the

the path of righteousness; but who also walk in it themselves. Now as these two sorts of persons are said in this verse to rise unto unequal stations of glory in heaven (the former rising to a firmament-brightness only; the latter to a starlike splendor) we may reasonably suppose that they also rise to unequal degrees of grace and goodness on earth. And so they do. So generous, zealous and public spirited are the one sort as not to be content to go to heaven alone, but to take as many of their dear fellow creatures with them as they can: whereas the other sort, here termed *wise* only, are wise and wary; so wary, cautious and timid that they dare not attempt much for the cause of God and of precious souls. These are wise in an extreme; having such an unhappy insight into the amazing depravity and rooted prejudices of the world, that any great attempts to reclaim it will in their apprehension meet with no better a recompence than hard names and harder usage. Having thus considered the different names and characters of those two classes of religious persons specified in this verse; I should next have described their different stations in a future world. The former saith this same verse shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: the latter as the stars forever. But as this will be more amply set forth in another Meditation; I pass on to the next verse in which Gabriel concludes his long discourse to Daniel in this solemn manner: "Thou O Daniel, 4

shut up the words (*viz. of this prophecy*) and then seal the "book even to the time of the end," &c. The design of sealing a book or writing is two-fold; first to confirm and ratify its contents; on which account bonds and other covenants among men are seal'd: 2dly. to conceal a writing: thus we seal letters in order to conceal their contents. Now the sealing mention'd in this verse may refer to both these; it may mean that the prophecy which Gabriel had now deliver'd to Daniel was certain and sure; also that the matter of it must for some time be conceal'd. Such a dark veil hath the wisdom of God drawn over some future events, that tho' they may be fore known in general by the Spirit of prophecy, the precise time and manner of their fulfilment is conceal'd 'till near the time of their accomplishment, lest rash and over forward mortals should attempt to hasten  
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and precipitate them, if they were desirable; or obstruct them, if disagreeable. "Shut up the words of this prophecy, said Gabriel, even to the time of the end." "But adds He," in the latter part of this verse, as the end draws nearer, the prophecies will appear clearer; and inquisitive minds will be more intent to disclose them: "Many shall run to and fro (viz. in search of knowledge); whereby that valuable acquisition will be increased": this occasion'd that saying of Mr. Henry: *Light and truth are the daughters of time*—Thus we have ended Gabriel's long speech to Daniel, which takes up one long chapter, and part of two others. During the whole discourse Gabriel kept his standing on the nearer bank of Hiddekel; then Daniel lifting up his eyes, saw another Angel on the farther bank of that famous river, while Christ the Son of man and our glorious High priest hover'd over the midst of the river; having a ministring Angel on each side of Him.

- 5 Now one of these ministring Angels had the curiosity to ask the man cloth'd in linen\* who stood over the river, this question

"How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?"

For the greater satisfaction of this inquiring Angel the Son of Man in the next verse makes the most solemn protestation in an attitude the most striking: therefore "standing over the river Hiddekel between two witnessing Angels, he fix'd his feet upon its rolling waves as on a solid pavement; and spreading both hands

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\* *The man clothed*) Such a wonderful love was there in the Messiah's breast towards mankind, that even in Daniel's early age He assumed the very same human form in vision which He afterwards actually assum'd when He became incarnate and real man. Hence in this chapter He is repeatedly call'd—"The man clothed in white linen."



hands towards heaven\* (as if he would invoke all its inhabitants to bear witness to his oath) he swore by Him that liveth forever, 7 that the calamities of the Jewish church and nation should be for a *time, times, and an half*” Upon these mysterious words Daniel makes this remark in the next verse, “ I heard, but I understood 8 not;” It seems he heard the words distinctly; but did not understand their meaning; did not know the meaning of *time, times* and *an half*.—— Daniel being still at a loss to know the length of Zion’s troubles, his benevolence and sympathy induced him to put up this petition in the latter part of the verse, “ O my Lord what shall be the end of these things” i. e. of these troubles? To this Messiah replies, “ Go thy way Daniel, for the words are closed up and sealed† till the time of the end”: there- 9 fore be not so daring as to break open that sacred seal under which the Almighty has designedly conceal’d events from prying mortals; but do thou like the rest of thy fellow mortals wait the future openings of time and providence. Only, for thy better satisfaction I will disclose to thee two very desirable events, 1st. That the fore said national calamities will by a Divine blessing produce happy effects on many of thy countrymen——“ Many shall be 10 purified and made white and tried,” said He. 2dly. That they will continue little more than half so long as the former troubles did;‡ the former persecution continuing 2300 days Chapter viii. This latter 1290 days only; as the next verse sets forth. “ From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away (*viz. from the temple*) and the abomination (*or idol image*) which maketh desolate be set up (*by Antiochus*) there shall be 1290 days”; even that 11 same term which I just now mysteriously express’d by a *time, times* and

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\* Holding up the hand was anciently, and still continues to be in this and other nations a posture in taking oaths. Thus Abraham lifted up his hand to heaven when he took an oath Gen. xiv. 22. So did Jehovah himself Deut. xxxii. 40. I lift up my hand to heaven, and say.—I live forever.

† Closed up and seal’d) See this explained under verse 4.

‡ That the Jews were twice persecuted under King Antiochus we learn from the Maccabees & Prieux. See Prieux. pt. 2. B. 3. p. 290.

and *an half*; (verse 7.) and which according to thy request I have now mentioned so clearly and punctually as to specify the precise number of its days—By the way, if this *time*, *times* and *an half* be the same with 1290 days it must be about three years and an half; that very space of time which chronologers affix to Antiochus's latter persecution of the Jews. *Time*, say some, signifies one year; *times* two; which added to *an half*, denotes three years and an half\*. To proceed, Daniel having thus obtain'd a farther insight into some interesting events, he was solicitous that the curtain of futurity might be open'd a little wider; therefore he still kept his present standing near the Messiah in expectation that this Sun of righteousness would dart a few more rays of light and knowledge into his dark mind: This induc'd the Messiah to dismiss him a second time, saying "Go thy way 'till the end be; 13 for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" In these words two things are noticeable, namely the Prophet's dismissal from his present situation; and a promise of rest in a future state. First they set forth the Prophet's dismissal from his present delightful situation on the banks of Hiddekel where he had a vision of glorious Angels, and of one infinitely above Angels; Go thy way, said Messiah; Whither? Certainly to thy former post and employment in thy own family and at the King's Court: Go thy way O Daniel from this delightful spot; and be content to exchange these celestial visions for those active scenes of life which await thee both as the King's Prime Minister, and as a servant of God, who has some work for thee still—From 1: this we should learn so to divide our time between our closet devotions and secular business, that neither of them may encroach too much on the other. As there are seasons when God's word calls us into our closets, so are there seasons when it saith "leave your closets and betake yourselves to your shops of business. 2dly.

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\* *Tho' three years and an half be not exactly the same with 1290 days, the difference is so small as to be probably no greater than those different chronologies which may subsist in places so distant as Persia and Britain; yea, 'tis not so great as actually subsisted between Britain and ne'bouring nations before the year 1752.*

The words also hold forth a promise of rest to the weary prophet at the end of life. "Thou shalt rest" said Messiah: But did not Daniel already enjoy as much rest as heart could wish? being under an indulgent Sovereign in a magnificent court, where he was advanced to a most exalted station, and plumed with the most shining and spreading honours. Be it so; yet was it not with Daniel as with tall trees which are more lash'd by winds on high than on low ground? And did not his wide spreading honours make him a broader and fairer mark for the arrows of calamity? And how deeply he was wounded by them the preceding parts of this history have mournfully informed us—But there remaineth a rest for the people of God said an Apostle. That rest did Messiah here promise. When Daniel's body was laid to rest in the grave; and his soul gone to its rest in God, then he would never feel the stings of envy and malice or the sharp arrows of slander; then his anxious breast would no longer be the troublesome seat of heart-corroding cares about state matters: from all these he must be happily releas'd forever.

### *Remarks and Inferences.*

1. Was it such an heart reviving consideration to the Jews that the Archangel Michael would in after-ages stand up as their Prince, and perform for them those benevolent offices enumerated at the beginning of this chapter; how reviving must it be to all Christians that a far greater Prince, viz. Emanuel God-man, has risen and will rise up for his covenant People. He stood up for them in that treaty of peace which He enter'd into with the Father; In their law-room He also stood up on mount Calvary, where He bare their sins in his own body on the accursed tree. He likewise stands up for them at the right hand of his Father's throne, where He ever lives to make intercession for them.

2. From the honourable name given to the religious persons, who in verse 3d. are denominat'd *wise* even by an Angel, it may be inferr'd that religion is grossly misunderstood and misrepresented when 'tis so frequently ascrib'd to a frenzical superstitious distemper'd mind by the censorious world; also when people are ashamed to appear in a religious character lest they should be scorn'd and



and ridicul'd as weak and foolish. But certainly religion is the highest wisdom, because it pursues the greatest designs, fixeth on the highest and grandest subjects, engageth in the most important matters, and seeks an happiness equal to the boundless desires and eternal duration of the soul. Religion, when rightly understood, will be found to have a better claim to true wisdom than any of its most specious Competitors. Wit indeed may sparkle in conversation, and adorn the page or pulpit; but of little importance is it in the greatest concerns of this life; and still less in the more important concerns of the next. And as to human learning and speculative knowledge these when separated from a religious good life, will be found little better than a shining glow-worm.

3. The same verse undeniably proves that as there are different degrees and attainments of grace on earth, there will be different degrees of glory and felicity in heaven; degrees of glory as different from each other as the azure firmament differs from and is excell'd by sparkling stars. Yea, even among those whom Divine grace will advance to the highest orb of stars, there will be different gradations: for said the Apostle "As one star differeth from another star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead" 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42.

4. Must they who turn many to righteousness shine in celestial glory with a star-like splendor, what will be the fate of others who by various artifices turn many from the paths of righteousness? I refer to those who mislead Souls into pernicious errors, or by their own falls or follies cast stumbling blocks in the way of Zion's young travellers; or who to the utmost of their power do prejudize the unwary against the good ways of God by odious representations of them, or by vilifying those who walk in them; in short, who by a bad education and example lead astray even their own offspring as well as others. Certainly a double damnation must be the doom of those who destroy others souls as well as their own,

5. What contrary effects have the same trials and troubles upon upright and depraved minds. "Many shall be tried, purified and

and made white, says the tenth verse, but the wicked will go on and do wickedly. The like contrary influence that fire has on clay and wax, or that showers of rain have on a dead and living tree, the same have afflictions upon well dispos'd and ill dispos'd persons. The former are hereby purify'd and made white, said Messiah, just as substantial cloth is made whiter by washing, while rags by the same means become more raggy.

6. What gladfom tidings are these to every weary pilgrim-christian in a dying hour "*Go thy way for in the end thou shalt rest*" (verse 10.) That this life is not a state of complete rest universal experience painfully testifies: "all things, said Solomon, are full of labour." The throng, the bustle and hurrys of towns and cities; the toils and turmoils of the field with the busy traffic of the rolling ocean do loudly proclaim this. Indeed all our earthly rests have a mixture of restlessness; at least the proceed from it, or lead to it. Thus the ease and refreshment enjoy'd by the laborious husbandman at night derives their chief sweetness from the toils of the preceding day. Yea, after the repose of the night we usually rise to similar cares, pains and sorrows in the morning; also to the same doubts, fears, temptations and corruptions; sometimes to greater. But after all, 'tis encouraging to consider that *there remaineth a rest for the people of God*, Heb. iv. 9. Their bodies must rest in the grave: their souls find a rest in God, Isa. lvii. 2. "They shall rest in their beds"; meaning their graves; which will be to them what a soft bed is to the weary labourer; methinks therefore this language of Job (*I would not live always*) should be the constant language of all weary christians when death comes to undress them; "I would not live always in a world of toil, pain and uneasiness." This body of sin, disease and death which imprisons the noble soul is no such desirable a mansion-house; nor are the defilements of the world, the temptations of satan, the vices of the wicked, and the peevishness of professing christians so highly agreeable as to make me wish a longer life than heaven has allotted; or to be unwilling to retire to rest at the night of death—Foolish creature! art thou afraid of retiring to bed, and (in order thereto) of having thy twinkling candle put out; or rather to have it removed from its clay-socket on earth, and

fixed in an higher celestial orb, there to shine like the stars forever and ever"—In the mean time what will this promise (*go thy way for thou shalt rest*) what will it avail dying sinners whom rampant lusts and stormy passions have made them like the troubled sea which cannot rest, and whose waters cast up mire and dirt, Isa. lvii. 20. Certainly if life cannot give them a satisfying rest, how can the agonies of death and the miseries of damnation do it?

7. What a seasonable dismissal did the aged prophet receive when his Divine Master said—"Go thy way Daniel for thou shalt rest"—And indeed it was high time for him to retire and enjoy rest after he had spent 71 years in the embarrassing cares and affairs of government under four or rather five Kings. Upon these considerations Daniel's dismissal from an hurry of business would be highly acceptable; and these words—"thou shalt rest" would be music in his ears. Most willing would this pious and mortified man of God be to quit an uneasy ensnaring situation, notwithstanding its being so high, honorable and lucrative; and to retire even from a palace where faction raged, and where he had probably found more annoyances and vexations than are commonly felt in the poorest cottages. Now from aged Daniel's dismissal at that time let all aged persons take the hint and retire with all convenient speed from the toils, hurrys and temptations attending public business; for death will certainly be shocking in an high degree to those who have been so fond of business, bustle and company as not to allow themselves sufficient leisure for religious retirement and devout meditation. Retire therefore often by yourselves in order to commune with God and your own hearts. There recollect what you have seen, heard and read of Divine things; and seek greater acquaintance with God, with your Redeemer, with yourselves, and with that eternal world which you boarder upon. Be not too anxious to know what others are doing or will do abroad in the world; but be more concern'd that your work as christian's be going on, and yourselves growing up into a gradual meetness for the inheritance of the Saints in light. Be it known "the end of all things is at hand"; i. e. of all earthly things relating to ourselves; but an indwelling Conscience,



conscience, either solacing or scourging the soul with scorpion lashes, will never come to an end: therefore, as the time of your departure draws near, be sober, be vigilant; walk circumspectly, and wait patiently all the days of your appointed time till your change come.

*The End of the Exposition.*

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A P P E N D I X.

Unwilling to leave a blank page here, I choose to fill it up by rectifying a mistaken supposition of some on Chapter IV. 30; I mean a supposition that Nimrod Noah's great grandson was the original Founder of Babylon, because in Gen. x. 10, 'tis asserted that "the beginning of his kingdom was Babel." But this is a weak deduction drawn from an uncertain supposition. Indeed Babylon in the most early ages was call'd Babel; but in the forecited xth chapter, it is so call'd merely because it had that name when Moses wrote that narrative. But the next xith chapter undeniably proves that Babel was not actually built till some time after: also, that neither Nebuchadnezzar who boasted, "*this is great Babylon which I have built*" nor Nimrod were the original founders or architects of that illustrious city; but those daring creatures who said to each other "Let us build us a city and tower whose top may reach unto heaven" Gen. xi. 4; and who afterwards nam'd it Babel verse 9. That Babylon was this ancient Babel I infer 1st. from the close affinity there is between these two names; the city being first call'd Babel; afterwards Babel—on. And indeed most places, during so long an interval of time, change their names far more than thus. 2dly. Both Babel and Babylon appear to have been built in the very same place; Moses asserts that the city Babel and the tower in Babel were buik in the plain of Shinar Gen. xi. 1. Now that Babylonia was the ancient Shinar may be proved even from Daniel's 1st chapter, 2d. verse, where he expressly saith that Nebuchadnezzar carried the vessels of God's house to the house of his God in Shinar, i. e. to that great ancient tower which he had turn'd into an idol temple in Shinar, now call'd Babylon.

## E R R A T A.

N. B. p. denotes page; t. top; m. middle; b. bottom;  
me. meditations.

- p. 3. *marg. l.* 10. (the) *r.* (that) *l. last add* (ly) *to repeated.*  
p. 10. *near b.* (miserable) *r.* (miserably) (miserably) *r.* (misera-  
ble) p. 14. *b.* (the) *r.* (that) p. 16- *near b. after* (from) *add*  
(it) p. 18. *m.* (three cubits) *r.* (threescore) p. 25. *below m. af-*  
*ter* (God-head) *add* (dwelt) p. 30. (ate) *twice, instead of* (eat)  
p. 43. *below m.* (Campoon) *r.* (lampooon) *ditto* p. 50. *marg.*  
p. 24. *me.* (exemplied) *r.* (exemplified) p. 66. *marg.* (expediate)  
*r.* (expatiate) (spruning) *r.* (spurning) p. 67. *m.* (fealts) *r.* (feats)  
p. 69. *m.* (daity) *r.* (daily) p. 78. *near b.* (as) *r.* (up). p. 80.  
*words within this [ ] to be omitted.* p. 45. *me. dele* (inwardly)  
p. 111. *m.* (derives) *r.* (derive) p. 52. *me.* (that) *r.* (than)  
p. 54. *me.* (leadeth) *r.* (leading)



*Messiah, that wonderful Physician, apply's reviving  
and healing cordials to a fainting breathless Prophet  
—being a Meditation on Chap. X. 18, 19.*

**T**HEN there came again and touched me, one like the appearance of a man, and He strengthened me, and said; O man greatly beloved, fear not; peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong. And when He had spoken unto me, I was strengthen'd and said, let my Lord speak for thou hast strengthen'd me.

What tenderness and compassion do these words set forth. Never certainly did an indulgent mother more officiously and affectionately quiet her affrighted afflicted child than this Son of Man did the Prophet at this time; nor did any Physician ever administer more reviving cordials to a languishing Patient than this compassionate Physician now did—What cordials? Why 1st. an assurance of God's love: O man greatly belov'd! said Messiah. But are none the objects of special Divine love except those who possess virtues and graces in that eminent degree which this Prophet did? Yes the very meanest in Christ's household are the dear objects of his special love. For are not all of them children of the same heavenly Father? Do not all of them wear his features, tho' not in equal degrees? In a word, as all of them love God, all of them are beloved by him. Is it ask'd; what are the grounds of God's love to his people? Is it because they first loved Him, and did Him much service? No; if this were the prime source of God's love, it would be no better than the selfish sordid love which He justly condemns in many of us; and we might in that case speak as diminutively of his love as our Saviour doth of that of the carnal Jews, Luke vi. "If ye love them that *first* love you, what thank have ye? do not publicans and harlots also love those that love them? Undoubtedly the antecedent unmerited goodness of the Divine nature is the spring of God's love to us, and of ours to Him. We love Him because He first loved us, said



said the Apostle John. Deity no doubt saw many amiable qualities in Daniel which endear'd that faithful servant to Him; but I ask, who or what drew the lovely picture and fair lineaments in Daniel's heart and life? Certainly the Spirit of God was the pencil, or rather the Divine hand which drew them; but the love of God set both on work, and thereby confirm'd his own word in Ezek. xvi. 14. It was perfect thro' my comeliness which I put upon thee. Another ingredient in that reviving draught which Messiah now administer'd to his fainting Prophet was *Peace*: "O man greatly belov'd, Peace be unto thee." What reviving what seasonable tidings were these, after such a terrific scene had been so lately presented to Daniel. When that affrighted Prophet had seen a celestial inhabitant approach him in a form so gigantic, with a visage resplendent as lightning, with eyes like blazing lamps, and with thunder in his voice (see verses 5, 6, 8, and 9.) the humble man suspected that war and destruction must be his doom; therefore he fell to the ground speechless and breathless: but he was happily mistaken. The messenger was not an herald at arms but an ambassador of peace, even the loving Messiah, who said "Peace be unto thee" And certainly He who said to Daniel "Peace be unto thee" might well be credited, seeing He himself was that great Peace-maker, who by his death and sacrifice had engag'd to break down the partition wall which stood between an injur'd God and injurious sinners: consequently when He came into the world at the time of his incarnation his great errand was to make and preach peace: and when He afterwards left the world his last legacy to his disciples and people was "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you." In what a blessed state are the people of God, who have peace with their Maker and with their own consciences: a glorious peace which the smiles of the world cannot give, nor its frowns take away; no nor death or the grave destroy; for they have a gracious promise that at death they shall enter into peace, Isa. lviii. 3. Tho' the jarring humors of their bodies will then be in a state of war, threatening them with a near approaching dissolution; yea tho' the king of terrors may stand fiercely over them with his fatal dart, just ready to strike it into their vitals, they may triumphantly

umphantly sing " O death where is thy sting ? tho' my flesh and my heart fail me God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." What heart reviving cordials are these ! But to whom do they belong ?—Not to the presumptuous self confident or self righteous ; not to the sensual and self indulgent who are habitually carried down the stream of their own depraved appetites, lusts, and passions, but to vigilant, prayerful, laborious, self denying heavenly Christians, who have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, and his laws transcribed into their lives : I now proceed to the 3d. reviving cordial which the compassionate Messiah administer'd to this fainting breathless Prophet, namely an *antidote against fear*. Into such a mighty consternation had Daniel been cast by the former glorious appearance and approach of this Son of Man, that his visage turn'd pale as death ; his blood stagnated and grew chill ; in a word he fell flat on the ground, where he lay speechless and apparently breathless. This mov'd the compassionate Messiah to come to him a second time saying " O man greatly beloved fear not" i. e. be not slavishly afraid of me who now speak to thee ; For tho' there be overwhelming majesty in my countenance, and terrifying thunder in my voice, my love to thee is so strong that in process of time I shall sustain a bloody conflict for thee against all thy spiritual enemies ; yea lay down my very life to save thee from eternal death—Again, this expression—" O man greatly beloved, fear not"—might intend thus much—O Daniel fear not death. Tho' thy visage is now pale as death, yea tho' thou seemest to have drawn thy last breath, fear not ; for I am the resurrection and the life ; and he that believeth on me, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live again. The voyage between this world and another is indeed awful, but I am the way and truth leadeth to eternal life. Dost thou remember I was with three of thy countrymen and companions when they were pent up in a glowing furnace, and I brought them safely out of it, and I am equally able and willing to conduct thee also safely thro' the deary regions of death. 3dly. This encouraging declaration—" O man greatly beloved, fear not"—imports this also ; O man fear not to take thy trial before the tribunal of the eternal Judge, for I am that same Son of Man whom in a late vision thou sawest coming in the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days, in order

order to repeal the condemning sentence at that critical moment when Judgment was set, and doom's day books open'd, chapter vii. 13. O my soul, how solacing must this be not only to Daniel, but to me, and to all the people of God, especially if trouble of mind seize us when the pale messenger death comes to fetch us out of this world! 4thly. O man greatly beloved, fear not to associate with Angels in a future world. The mere sight of these celestial inhabitants, I perceive, affrights and overwhelms thee, even tho' they come on the most gracious peaceful errand, and address thee in the mildest language; tho' they bring heaven and glory in their faces and features; it seems a few rays thereof are too dazzling for eyes of flesh to behold, and too overpouring for frail mortality to bear. But O man fear not; for when at death all sin shall be purg'd out of thy soul; and when the rising body at the last day will shake off all frailty and imperfection, then instead of starting back from glorious Angels as from frightful bug-bears, it will be the reverse. Thus I have open'd the contents of those reviving cordials, which the compassionate Messiah apply'd to a fainting Prophet. "One like the appearance of a man came and touch'd me, saith Daniel; and He said, O man greatly beloved; fear not; peace be unto thee": Let me in the next and last place consider the speedy and effectual cure wrought upon him; which is thus express'd "When He (meaning the Messiah) had spoken these words unto me I was strengthen'd" said Daniel. He was strengthen'd with all needful power in the inward and outward man; he receiv'd a fresh flow of spirits to encounter difficulties, and strength to overcome them. And with what remarkable ease and speed was all this imparted? even in a few moments, and with a word speaking "Be strong, be strong" said Messiah; and with that word of command He immediately imparted help and healing to him. What a wonderful physician then is Messiah—Christ who carries on his cures not by a tedious course of physical prescriptions: No, his *healing* as well as *creating* works were perform'd in the same easy and expeditious manner—"He spake and it was done"—Here then I see the happy unhappy difference between God speaking and man speaking. A Minister speaks to the ear; but 'tis the prerogative of God and the Son of God to speak to the heart. Again, a master can  
command



command his servant to work ; but cannot by that word of command impart strength to perform his work. This shews how much better it is to serve God than the best master on earth ; seeing God not only gives his servants the best wages ; but imparts to them sufficient strength to do their work. “ O Lord, said the Prophet, thou has wrought all our works in us” Isa. xxvi. 12. Thus I have taken a full view of Daniel’s experiences. And tho’ I am greatly ashamed and humbled to reflect how much mine fall short of his, who by a single touch and a few words from the Messiah, was suddenly rais’d out of a very low and languid state into a comfortable one, yet I remember many happy seasons when the spirit of Christ hath apply’d gospel promises to my heart in a dark and disconsolate hour ; by these I have been as much refresh’d as the fainting animal spirits could be with the richest physical cordial—And now if my gracious God and Saviour hath reach’d out such seasonable supports and comforts under my lesser trials and troubles, will He not impart even greater when I stand in greater need of them in a dying hour. I confess I have been under great anxiety at times to think what will become of me, if near-approaching death should bring me into that destitute, and helpless condition to which I have seen many reduc’d on a death bed, when they could neither read, pray or meditate, on account of languishing sickness or torturing pain ; yea, when they could neither lift an hand to help themselves, nor lift up a prayer to God for help. But by turning my views to Daniel’s present case I am encourag’d. For I find him high in the favour of God amidst his deepest distress ; therefore he is call’d “ O Daniel greatly lov’d”, when he was smitten to the ground, verse 10. He was—“ O man greatly lov’d”—when he became speechless and unable to utter a word in prayer. He was—“ O man greatly lov’d”—when he had not strength to move an hand for God. Finally, he was—“ O man greatly lov’d”—when the pale image of death sat upon his face, verse 8, and 15. Such O my soul is the Messiah’s love to his people amidst the most gloomy and distressing season’s both of life and death ! May I experience much of it during both those seasons.

*The Angel Gabriel preaching the doctrine of a Resurrection to the Old Testament Church : being a Meditation on Chap. XII. 2.*

**M**ANY of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake ; some to everlasting life ; and some to shame, and everlasting contempt.

When an Angel from heaven undertakes to instruct mortals on earth, should they not be all ear, and all attention unto his doctrine, especially when 'tis of such infinite importance as this ; a doctrine too deliver'd by a Seraphic Spirit, whose instructions may be fully relied on, because his intellect was never envelop'd in those mists of error, nor his affections biased with those prejudices, which, more or less, hang on all human minds. Let me therefore now place myself with an attentive and teachable disposition before this Angelic preacher, who first speaks of multitudes sleeping in the dust of the earth. What an humiliating consideration is this ! that mortals in general, the highest as well as lowest, the richest as well poorest, and the most noble as well as ignoble must be reduc'd to such a low and debasing condition as this ! But so it is, and so it must be. Tho' some have had the most magnificent halls or palaces for their habitations, and even beds of ivory to lye on, Amos vi. Tho' their bodies have been ever so richly adorn'd and sed, they must moulder into dust, Bodies of the finest shape and most beautiful features, which cautiously avoided the smallest speck of dirt or dust during life, and whose tombs are blazon'd with swelling titles of honour, must soon be transform'd, first into noisom corruption ; afterwards into heaps of dust. This gave rise to Cowley's significant epitaph,

Here lyes the Great—false marble—where ?  
Nothing but poor and fordid dust lyes here.

However, these beds of dust claim one privilege not enjoy'd even on beds of state. For did any Grandee or Monarch enjoy such undisturb'd repose on beds of down as the dead do on beds of dust ;

dust; where (as Job expresseth it) the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest; where no frightful noises or alarms disturb nor any distressing dreams harass them. Their death is a soft and quiet sleep; and their after-resurrection resembles a man rising hale from bed in the morning. But how long must these Sleepers lye in their beds of dust? Job answers — “ Man lyeth down, said he, and riseth not till the heavens be no more (i. e. till the end of the world,) they shall not awake nor be rais'd out of their sleep” Neither the shouts of conquering armies, nor heaving earthquakes; neither roaring seas, nor rattling thunder can disturb the repose of the silent dead, nor awake them out of their long sleep. One thing indeed will at last awake them, tho' they were sleeping at the centre of the earth: for saith St. Paul, —“ The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead shall arise in the twinkling of an eye at the sound of the last trump”—which

“ Will pour a dreadful note; the piercing call  
Shall rattle in the centre of earth's ball;  
The spacious circuit of creation shake;  
The living die with fear; the dead awake;  
Shake off the slumber of ten thousand years;  
And on the borders of new worlds appear.”

*Dr. Young's last Day.\**

Yes; and that memorable awaking will be attended with this unprecedented circumstance, that it will never be succeeded by another sleeping time. In hell they cannot sleep, tho' they would; in heaven they will not sleep, tho' they could—Thus I have taken a full view of that part of my subject which exhibits a Resurrection—But on what ground do I build my faith in this doctrine? Does the word of God confirm it? Yes, 'tis repeatedly affirm'd therein especially in the Evangelists, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in their Epistles. One of those Apostles spends the greatest  
part

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\* *A most sublime animated nervous and heart-affecting small Poem, of a very inconsiderable price.*



part of a long chapter in establishing this fundamental article, viz. 1 Cor. xv. Almost all the prophets bear witness to it; of which one notable specimen now stands before me; another in Hof. xiii. 14. I will ransom them from the power of the grave; O grave I will be thy destruction; yea in the more early age of Job was this doctrine most clearly reveal'd, Job xix. 25, 26. I know that my Redeemer liveth: and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and tho' after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" Nay me-thinks I can trace a Resurrection not only in God's sacred word, but in many of his handy works; which strongly corroborates my faith in this doctrine. What is the earth but a common grave, in which seeds, plants and flowers lye buried a long time. And what's each returning spring, but a general resurrection. The earth then heaves and opens; plants and flowers rise out of their graves; and assume illustrious forms and colours as different from and superior to what they were in their dirty misshapen roots within ground, as can be suppos'd to pass upon those dead bodies at the general Resurrection which have layn buried the same length of time—Again; as I trace a Resurrection in each rising plant, flower and spire of grass, so also in each ear of corn: I see the dry, wither'd and apparently dead seeds cast into the furrow; there they lye so long entomb'd in a rotting condition, that it seems scarce possible they should ever rise again without a miracle; yet our own eyes undeniably prove that they do; and in a more wonderful unaccountable way too than our dead bodies will at the general Resurrection; for each seed rises twenty, forty, or perhaps sixty fold; each of them as large as the single seed from which all the rest sprang. Furthermore, even small flies and insects teach me a Resurrection. How many grubs lye underneath ground inclos'd in little sloughs, as the dead are in coffins; yea, some of them in a sort of stone sepulchres consisting of sand cemented by their own slime: there they lye entomb'd without any appearance of life. But in a few weeks they rise out of those little sepulchres and become creatures of another kind and another form, yea of another element, perhaps a butterfly sailing thro' the air in a garment of as fine colours as ever adorn'd a court-lady. Now as both the word and works of God do, with united voices,  
join

join Gabriel in proclaiming a Resurrection, my faith cordially embraceth it. Only an evil heart of unbelief some times asks—“How can these things be?” How can human bodies which sleep in the dust, yea, which are crumbled into dust, rise out of it? But this question I silence with that which the Apostle ask’d, Acts xxvi. 8. “Why should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead?” Certainly that omnipotent power which at first form’d man of the dust of the ground, Gen. ii. 7, can with equal ease raise him out of the dust on the resurrection-day. If it be enquir’d how the dead must then rise from their beds of dust? the Angel Gabriel thus answers in the latter part of the verse under present contemplation—“Some shall awake to everlasting life; and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” How strange an expression is this! “Some (meaning the righteous) shall awake and rise to everlasting life! What, live forever! forever in a state of perfect happiness! an happiness which, after a revolution of millions of ages, will be no nearer an end than at first set off! What a strange life must this be to those whose lives on earth have been but as a span or hand’s breadth! But what must be the fate of the unrighteous and unholy on the resurrection morning? even the reverse of the former; for they must awake and rise to shame and everlasting contempt, adds Gabriel. Their shame and confusion will arise from several causes and quarters. As 1st. From that glaring discovery which will then be made to them of their great sinfulness and consequent vileness. In this world stupid sinners have no clear insight into the vileness of their hearts on account of that veil of ignorance and self-love which overspreads their minds; and that spiritual stupor which hath seiz’d their consciences, also that hardness which hath petrified their hearts. But when they awake on the awful Resurrection morning their consciences will awake too; and the eyes of their minds as well as bodies being then open’d, they will be deeply convinc’d that sin hath made their originally noble souls viler in the sight of God and of all the glorified than the vilest reptile. Besides, as the Resurrection will consign them over to Judgment; when, as our Saviour said, “their is nothing hid which shall not be made known” this will be another source of shame at the great day. For if so much shame and confusion have seiz’d sin-

ners

ners when only one of their base actions hath been unmask'd and expos'd before a small company; what shame and confusion must overwhelm them when all their hidden crimes shall be laid before the two assembled worlds of men and Angels—Having thus taken a view of the *shame*, I am next to consider the *Contempt* which will be poured upon the wicked on the resurrection morning: "Some, adds Gabriel, shall awake to everlasting contempt" Let persons, during this life, be rais'd to stations ever so high, and possess talents ever so great; let them also make ever so brilliant a figure in wealth, war, politicks, literature, or curious inventions; yet, if all these shining qualities are united to a vicious heart and life, the possessor will be no more respected in the world of spirits than a monster is in this material world: yea, seeing many have made themselves monsters of wickedness in this world, may they not possibly rise with monstrous forms in the next? yea, may they not assume nearly the shapes of those brutes to which they have most assimilated their minds and manners? Why may not the bodies of the fierce and cruel partly resemble bears and wolves; while drunkards and gluttons wear the shapes of Hogs, &c.\* 'Tis now high time to pause awhile, and enquire what impressions these foregoing contemplations have made on my mind. In the scenes I have been contemplating, I cannot consider myself like spectators of a play, who never expect to act it over in their own persons. No, sooner or later I must act over again one of these scenes; namely on the resurrection morning, when I must awake either to everlasting life, or to shame and everlasting contempt; yea, and misery too. Now, let me impartially examine. To which of these two states do I belong? Have I yielded my members as instruments of righteousness, or unrighteousness?

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\* This supposition, which is no where that I know of contradicted by Christianity, is much countenanced by Pythagoras that celebrated Father of heathen Philosophers, who flourish'd in the reigns of King Cyrus and Darius; and who travel'd to Babylon, as the two Writers of his life assert, viz. Jamblicus and Porphyry. Consequently he was contemporary with Daniel; and probably visited that city during the residence of this Prophet in it.



ousness? of chastity and temperance, or of luxury and debauchery? if the latter, I have not only pamper'd my flesh, making it a richer feast for devouring worms in the grave; but I have been hatching another more corroding tormenting worm in my conscience in that world, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is never quenched, Mark ix. 4. But if on the contrary I have made my corporeal members instruments of righteousness; if I have been awaken'd to a right sense of my sins and danger thereby, and have been rais'd to a spiritual life; then I may conclude that I have obtain'd a part in the first resurrection, and may on good grounds expect a 2d. more glorious one at the last day, Rev. xx. 6. And O what a glorious morning will it be, when the cumbersome night-veil must be laid aside, and the garments of salvation put on. New risen Saints having then pass'd thro' the darkness of a very long night, the resurrection morning dawns, and smiles upon them; and they salute it with sparkling eyes and exulting hearts. The long sleepers having quitted Golgotha; have stepped forth out of their dormitory, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon them.

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*The Angel Gabriel unveiling the glories of the celestial world to the Inhabitants of this world.—A Meditation on Chap. XII. 3.*

**T**HEY that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the Stars forever and ever.

In the last Meditation my contemplative mind descended into the subterraneous regions of the dead where it took a turn among weeping sepulchres rattling charnal houses and opening graves casting forth their dead; some rising with horrid shapes and features; others in most beautiful forms, with joy sparkling in their countenances because "the glory of the Lord is risen upon them."

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In this next Meditation a sublimer subject invites me, like Elijah, to quit earth, not indeed in body but in spirit, and to soar above this clouded atmosphere unto the blew ethereal firmament and starry heavens; yea to soar up to those glorious regions where—"they that are *religiously* wise do shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever"\*—In the subject of my present contemplations two things do peculiarly draw my attention. 1st. The quality and qualifications of the celestial Messenger who brought the blessed tidings which are here announced, namely, not a fellow mortal, who, as the Apostle aptly phraseth it, receiv'd them "by the hearing of faith" but an Angel who had been an eye witness to these celestial glories and many ages an happy participator of them. 'Twas no less a personage than Gabriel who said some who rise to glory shall shine as the firmament; others as stars forever. A 2d. thing which attracts my attention is the gradations which will take place in the mansions of glory. These I am told will be very different. However, 'tis satisfactory to find that the very lowest station in heaven will be high and illustrious; for they who are advanced to it shine as the brightness of the firmament. How pure and bright is the azure sky when every cloud and vapour is expell'd from it? equally pure and bright will the very meanest saints be when they rise above this dusky clouded atmosphere and enter the pearly gates of the heavenly Jerusalem. They shall *shine* saith Gabriel; and so they must; for

1st. Their characters will then shine. The best characters on earth have been tarnish'd and sullied, partly thro' their own slips and falls, and still more by the defaming tongues of a malignant world. But at the great day, when there will be a resurrection of names as well as of bodies, their impeach'd sincerity will shine forth to the full conviction and confusion of all their accusers who had branded their best actions, charging them with the worst intentions. Besides, no slandering tongues can find admittance into those regions of perfect love; neither can they dart their keen stings

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\* How fully religion and religious persons are here and in other parts of sacred Writ honour'd with the names of wise and wisdom it was largely shewn when this verse was explain'd.

things so high—Again, as their characters will then shine with honor; so

3dly. Will their souls shine with spotless purity and splendor. In 2 Cor. iii. 18. the Apostle in describing the glorious transforming influence of the gospel on some souls even in this life, saith, "We all with open face beholding as in a glass, (viz. in the glass of the gospel) the glory of the Lord, are chang'd into the same image from glory to glory." How strong is the inference deducible from this! namely, that if the opaque image of God, that mere shadow of Deity, seen or rather contemplated in the glass of gospel ordinances only, has such a transforming assimilating influence on the soul as to spread a Godlike glory over it, what an amazing lustre and glory will the soul receive when it shall see God, not darkly, as thro' a glass, but face to face in the celestial world, where the uncreated sun of righteousness will shine upon it with a full-ey'd glory!

Similar to this passage is that in ps. xxxiv. 5. "They looked unto Him and were enlighten'd,"—It seems one look, one glance of the Deity clothed them with light, and cast a glory upon their souls; 'twas but a thought, the cast of an eye, and they were as full of light and glory as they could hold. O my soul! What an amazing transforming change will pass upon thee, when instead of viewing Jehovah darkly, thro' the glass of gospel ordinances, thou shalt "see him face to face, and eye to eye," as Isaiah emphatically speaks, —

3dly. As the souls, so the very bodies of the righteous, must, on the resurrection morning, shine with a most brilliant lustre. In the present dying world, (this vale of tears) languor, paleness and mortality, wretchedness and dejection often sit on the faces of our clay-made bodies. How far will it be from this on the resurrection-day, when those bodies which have been sown in corruption and dishonour, must be rais'd in glory, and must be made like unto Christ's most glorious body. 1 Cor. xv; Phil. iii. 21.

Yea a celestial glory has sometimes irradiated the bodies of the righteous, even in this present darksome imperfect state.



Thus, when Moses saw God face to face on mount Horeb, such rays of light and glory, streaming from the uncreated sun, darted upon him as caus'd his face to shine with a more dazzling lustre than mortals could look at without an interposing veil. To the same cause it was owing, that the face of Stephen, the proto-martyr, shone like the face of an Angel, Acts vi. Now if our bodies are susceptible of such a radiant glory in their earthly state of abasement, what will they be in their exalted glorified state? How vast the disparity between terrestrial and celestial bodies, both with respect to permanency and perpetuity! between the unfading beauties of a star, and the fading beauties of a flower, or picture! Let the limner's glowing pencil draw ever such fine and lively colours, how soon doth the corroding teeth of time deface them! And in how short a time doth old age turn the blooming face of youth into wrinkles and deformity! Besides, O my soul, death will soon draw a formidable eclipse ever me and every human face, and drink up every bright and cheerful ray which illuminate it. Job xiv. 20. "Thou changeest his countenance and sendest him away." However, these being human irradiations only, we wonder not to see them pass away so quickly, as when the countenance has been ting'd with celestial rays.

How soon did those rays of celestial glory, which shone so bright in the face of Moses, vanish like rays of the setting sun! And tho' Stephen's face had an Angelic appearance one hour, in a few hours after it wore a most ghastly visage, when he was overwhelm'd with a shower of stones. And how vastly different an appearance did our Saviour make when his dying head hung down pale, ghastly, and perhaps bloody, on the torturing cross upon mount Calvary, from what it had done when his face shone like the sun, a while before, on mount Tabor.—It will not be thus, O my soul, with celestial, nor indeed with terrestrial bodies, when translated to Heaven; their lustre then will be permanent and perpetual: for, as Gabriel, who well knew it, here informs me, they must shine not like a momentary meteor, not like a grey-bearded comet or shooting star, but as the fixed stars forever and ever.

And now O my soul enquire whether thou art hereafter to be advanced to these foresaid exalted stations in celestial glory. Art

thou indeed possessed of that wisdom which is said to come from above, and which leads the soul to things above? As the Apostle said, Art thou wise unto salvation? That knowledge which teacheth persons to call God their best portion, whilst at the same time they love a thousand trifles better: that knowledge which only points out the road to Heaven without walking in it, is not wisdom, but egregious folly—"Tis now high time to transfer my contemplations from those happy persons, who must shine in celestial glory, like the brightness of the firmament, unto those still happier ones, who are to shine with the far superior splendor of sparkling stars. And how bright do those starry diamonds shine. "They form, *said Mr. Harvey*, night's richest dress; and sparkle upon her sable robe like jewels of the finest lustre." Stars do almost rival the glorious sun itself in brightness; yea according to modern astronomy, every fixed star is a sun to some revolving earth or planet. And must any of our earth-born race ever equal the lustre of these bright celestial orbs? Yes; "They that turn many to righteousness, adds Gabriel, must shine as the stars forever and ever."

But what is it that instrumentally raiseth these star-robed Saints to such high spheres in glory?—"Their turning many to righteousness," replies Gabriel. Let me therefore enquire, have I been a pattern of righteousness myself; and have I strongly recommended it to others both by precept and example! Have I recommended righteousness in all its important branches; namely both a justifying, sanctifying and moral righteousness? Am I content to go to heaven myself without attempting to take others along with me? This betrays such a narrow selfish spirit that if I reach heaven, which however is dubious, I can but expect a low station there, by shining only as the brightness of the firmament—To be a little more particular: Am I a Minister, let me examine what has been my chief aim and endeavour in carrying on the Ministry? Have I only regarded the important pastoral charge as a *Living*; being solicitous for nothing more than procuring a livelihood by it? Or have I, like St. Paul, been willing to spend and be spent in the service of immortal souls? Again; with what success have I labour'd? Have I been instrumental in turning sinners from darkness to light, from sin to holiness, and from self-

righteousness to Christ the Lord our righteousness? Perhaps I can say with pleasure that I have turned some, yea many, as this verse speaks; but from what? and to what? Have I only turn'd them from one party and profession to another; from one place of worship to another; or from one scheme of doctrines to another? alas, worthless, odious, selfishness may have prompted me to all this.

Again; am I a Parent or Master; and have I not, like Israel, been an empty vine bringing forth fruit only to myself. Hos. x. 1. Do I not imprison almost all my religion within mine own breast, and my closet walls? Am I solicitous that my children and servants, do love, obey, and serve me; but not equally intent upon their loving, obeying, and serving an infinitely better Father and Master in heaven? Can it be truly said of me as it was of Abraham, in Gen. xviii. I know him, said God, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord. Have I by serious advice, a good example, and fervent prayer, been instrumental in converting and saving my children and servants, or have I ever so much as attempted it?

Lastly, am I a citizen of the world at large, let me examine: Do I aim at nothing farther than creeping quietly and peaceably thro' it to heaven without leading others the same happy road? Have I no inclination to confront the false opinions, the corrupt maxims and ill habits of a degenerate age? no spirit to combat its predominant vices; no courage to check the swearer, the drunkard, the railer, sabbath-breaker, or oppressor, in order to prevent their drawing down almighty vengeance on their guilty heads? If this be the case I do not so much as endeavour to turn many to righteousness; consequently, altho' I be personally ever so pious and righteous, I cannot expect to shine in celestial glory, like the stars, forever and ever. Let this consideration, O my soul, be a prevailing motive with thee to extend thine usefulness beyond the little circle of *self*, and become a more public and extensive blessing to the world around. Remember those words of an Apostle, "He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; but he that soweth bountifully, shall reap bountifully."





